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P O E M S.

BY

THOMAS EDWARDS HANKINSON, M.A.

LATE OF

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

AND MINISTER OF ST. MATTHEW'S CHAPEL, DENMARK HILL.

EDITED BY HIS BROTHERS.

Second Edition.

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H45

TO THE
MASTER AND FELLOWS
OF
CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,
These Poems,
BY A MEMBER OF THEIR COLLEGE,
WHO,
FOR SEVERAL SUCCESSIVE YEARS, OBTAINED THE
SEATONIAN PRIZE,
ARE
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THEIR
VERY OBEDIENT AND HUMBLE SERVANTS,
THE EDITORS.

725566



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DAVID

PLAYING THE HARP BEFORE SAUL.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1831.

ADVERTISEMENT.

“ THE REV. THOMAS SEATON, M.A., late Fellow of Clare Hall, bequeathed to the University the rents of his Kislingbury estate, now producing clear £40 per annum, to be given yearly to that Master of Arts who shall write the best English Poem on a sacred subject. The Vice-Chancellor, the Master of Clare Hall, and the Greek Professor (who are the disposers of this premium) determine the subject, which is delivered out in January, and the Poem is to be sent to the Vice-Chancellor on or before the 29th of September following. The Poem is to be printed, and the expense deducted out of the product of the estate : the remainder is given as a reward to the composer.”

Cambridge, January, 1831.

The Examiners gave *Notice*, that, should any Poem appear to them to possess distinguished merit, a premium of £100 would be adjudged.

The above Premium was awarded to the REV. T. E. HAN-KINSON, M.A., of Corpus Christi College.

He waked his noblest numbers, to control
The tide and tempest of the maniac's soul ;
Through many a maze of melody they flew,—
They rose like incense,—they distilled like dew ;
Poured through the sufferer's breast delicious balm,
And soothed remembrance till remorse grew calm,—
Till Cain forsook the solitary wild,
Led by the minstrel like a weaned child.

* * * * *

The lyre of Jubal, with divinest art,
Repelled the dæmon, and revived his heart.
Thus song, the breath of heaven, had power to bind
In chains of harmony the mightiest mind ;
Thus music's empire in the soul began ;—
The first-born poet ruled the first-born man.

MONTGOMERY,

" World before the Flood," VI.

D A V I D

PLAYING THE HARP BEFORE SAUL.

“ THEY talk of Madness—Madness !—would it
were !

For Madness is unconsciousness ;—and then
The spirit falls asleep,—it recks not where !—

The maniac’s fetter and the maniac’s den :—

Dreaming itself the crowded denizen
Of its own gorgeous palace,—idly glad

Amid the pity or the scorn of men,—

Careless alike of fair, foul, good or bad,
And laughing at them all,—I would that I were mad !”

“ But *that* I am not :—like the fiends in Hell,
I writhe with anguish ; but, like them, alas,
I can remember and reflect too well :

My thoughts are no wild whirl, no cumbered
mass

Of non-existent phantoms : what I was
I know,—and what I am ;—but others deem

My reason wrecked and perished :—let it
pass !—

Yet would I give a monarch’s diadem
To be, in very sooth, the brain-struck thing I seem.”

“ Yes—I did leave my God !—and He hath left
My spirit to itself :—to me the sun
Of the great world of soul is set :—I drift

Amid the howling gloom,—the deep and dun
Darkness, that may be felt.—I start and run,
As if from sounds of anguish ;—vain to flee

From mine own spirit’s wail !—Ah ruined one !
The seer spake sooth ;—all fatal though it be,—
‘ Thou¹ didst forsake thy God—and God abandons
thee.’ ”

“ I ² stood on Carmel once, as day’s bright king
Was sinking : — Oh most musical stillness
 reigned,
As proudly he descended, carpeting
 The western waves with glory, ere he deigned
 To set his foot upon them ; — swift he gained
His bourne, — and what a change ! I left the brow
 All dark ; — and the great sea, like monster
 chained,
Heaved in its bellowing blackness from below. —
Oh God, I understand the ominous emblem now ! ”

“ Yet one there is, who calls himself my friend ;
 And looks into my face with large wild eyes, —
Unearthly eyes, — and ³ God, he says, doth send
 Him as my guide : — when midnight veils the
 skies
 Those large wild eyes meet mine ; — and in them
 lies
A soul-o’erpowering spell : — I love him not,
 Albeit I cannot hate — strange sympathies
Have bound us, sympathies of dreariest thought,
Where the mind shudders o’er the forms it has begot. ”

“ His beautiful eyes !—they ill beseem the flash,
That blasts, like lightning, in its sheer descent ;
Tears might have trembled on their long dark
lash,—
A seraph’s tears,—whom God’s high will had
sent,
Of wrath the all-unwilling instrument ;
Or seraph-rapture might have glistened there,
When forth on messages of love he went,
To snatch the thorn-wreath from the brow of care,
Or bring to waiting hope the promised meed of
prayer.”

“ Oh, what was that, of which the wreck he wears
Is still so sadly beautiful ? He fell
Below his happy, holy, bright compeers,—
Because the haughty spirit mote not dwell
With a superior essence—I could tell
A tale, not all unlike—for what are we—
We mortals, who mistrust—repine—rebel—
But daemons of an humbler pedigree,
Lifting an arm of dust—to combat Deity ?”

—Sad musings these!—but who was he, whose
breast

Bred them in loneliness, in silence nursed?

Say, who was he? — Of⁴ goodly forms the
best,—

High soul and noble bearing; for whom erst

The general roar of acclamation burst,

Hailing the Lord's anointed,—Israel's king,—

Of all her kings the stateliest and the first,—

To whom all eyes looked up—a lofty thing,

By nature formed to claim a nation's worship-
ping.

Aye he, whose Godlike tone and graceful port

Wrote king upon his forehead, more than all

The flimsy fopperies of a gaudy court,—

The purple robe and jewelled coronal :—

He, ⁵ freedom's champion—when, by Jabesh'
wall,

He set his foot on Ammon's haughty neck,—

Or ⁶ hurled, commissioned by the prophet-call,

The delegated bolt of wrath and wreck

Upon thy hapless sons, devoted Amalec!

But he was changed ! and long long hours would
 spend,
 Sitting in 'rapt and melancholy mood,
And hold strange converse with some viewless friend :
 So said he ; and his courtiers trembling stood,
 As in a spirit's presence, while the blood
Froze in their cheeks,—but ne'er were they allowed
 To catch the unearthly voice :—they only viewed
Their king's wild fit, —now mournful and now
 proud, —
In tears like chidden child, or laughing long and loud.

All cures were tried :—Philosophy talked long
 Of lofty reason's self-controlling power :—
He frowned, but spake not :—Friendship's silver
 tongue
 Poured mild persuasion on his calmer hour :—
 He wept—alas ! it was a bootless shower,
As ever slaked the desert :—Priests would call
 On heaven for aid :—but then his brow did lower
With treble gloom. “ Peace ! Heaven is good to
 all ;—
To all,” he sighed, “ but one : God hears no prayer
 for Saul.”

At length one spake of music,—and he told
How, wandering late in sorrow's vigil pale,
Where Bethlehem's ⁷ towers, in outline dark and
bold,
Becrest the heights that close her narrow vale,
He heard wild harp-tones, borne along the gale,
Melting in cadences so soft and slow,
It seemed the very air grew musical,
To wail his suffering ; and he bowed him low,
And hid his face and wept :—but wept away his
woe.

'Twas but a shepherd-boy whose simple song
Stole on the hush of midnight's deep repose,
What time, reclined his fleecy charge among,
He watched the heavens, till day-break should
unclose
Their gates of amethyst.—How oft the foes,
That battle Reason, own the mild control
Of simple spells, inanimate Nature throws,—
The voiceless quiet of the starry pole,—
Or sounds, that boast no speech, yet sweetly soothe
the soul.

They sent, and sought him out,—the shepherd-boy,

Who chanted to the hills his lonely strain,
In youth's simplicity of grief or joy ;—
And, when that fit returned, and heart and brain
Reeled in the spasm of their delirious pain,
They bade him wake the music of his shell.—

Then scanned he the dæmoniac's face, as fain
To explore its meaning ; —'twas a page, where Hell
Had written darker things than one like him might
spell.

And yet he gazed unblanched,—his innocent eyes
Fixed on those bloodshot orbs, — that iron
brow ;

Till, in its own despite, with mere surprise,
It half unbent its sternness :—e'en as though
A Seraph, in his walks of love below,
Confronted and rebuked the Evil one.

Oh there is virtue in the unclouded glow
Of virtue and of innocence alone
To cope with Satan's self, and bid his fiends begone !

“ Who ^s or what art thou ?” cried the king, “ and
why

Hast left thy rosy friends and joyous play,
To gaze on that thou know’st not ?—Hence ! mine
eye

Will scorch thy leaves, fairsapling ! Hence away !”

—No answer made the youth, but straight did lay
His hand upon the chords, and touched a low,
A deep and solemn note, like that the ray
Of infant sunlight might have loved to throw
From Memnon’s fabled lyre,—so that you scarce
could know

Aught palpable had brushed the trembling string ;

It spake with such bland utterance, on and on
Warbling spontaneously, like charmed thing,

Long after that, which woke it first, was gone.

—Saul started ; for that gentleness of tone
Struck with such contrast on his soul ; he raised

His haggard face, and on the shepherd’s son
Stedfastly, silently and sadly gazed,—

Aroused, but not displeased, much soothed and more
amazed—

A moment was the minstrel's earnest glance
Turned unto Heaven,—and Heaven hath seldom
thrown

Its glory on a lovelier countenance
Of rosy boyhood ; then, low bending down,
While his thick curls chastened with tinge of
brown

His cheek's vermilion, ⁹ seemed he to caress
And soothe his lyre to aid, as it had known
Its gentle master's love, and might express
Its own, in answering flow of musical tenderness.

“ I ¹⁰ bid thee speak to me, my lyre,
My lonely lyre, to me !
Awake thee to my touch of fire,
And set thy music free !
To the whirlwind's roar on the desert mountain,—
To the zephyr's whisper among the trees,—
To the still small voice of the pebbly fountain,—
To the sullen swell of the stormy seas,—
To the hush of night,—to the blaze of noon,—
Thou hast a voice and a soul in tune.”

“ Notes in silver softness blending,
Dew-like on the ear descending,—
Or startling, as though the lightning’s wings
Had dashed in thunder across thy strings.”

“ Every ¹¹ season and every scene,
Bleak and barren, or gay and green,—
The cloud, on sorrow’s breast that lies,—
The light, that laughs in pleasure’s eyes,—
The records of the olden days,—
The breath of prayer,—the hymn of praise,—
Whatever thy gentle aid may call,
Thou hast a voice and a soul for all.”

“ My lyre, I need, this dreary hour,
All thy softness and all thy power ;
To rend from the dæmon’s hands his prey,
And lead the lost one back to-day,—
One who has sold his spirit high
To Hell’s most drear idolatry :”—

“ Not ¹² to him whose fabled sway
Awees the flame-breathed steeds of day,

Or, when clouds invest his form,
Shouts amid the rising storm ;—
Not to her, who, legends tell,
Flings the witchery of her spell
Over Gods and mortals both,
All-prevailing¹³ Astaroth ;—
Not to such this being proud
Hath his blind submission vowed,
But stoops his soul and bows his knees
Unto gods more stern than these,
Worshipping, with groan and sigh,
At the shrine of misery.”

“ Oh¹⁴ yes ! to him each charm hath lost its hue, —
The earth her beauty and the sky his blue ;
While fiend-like memory, studying to annoy,
Points with lean finger to each perished joy ;
Hinting with scornful smile on bitter brow,
“ Thou once wert happy—why not happy now ?”
For him the heart, that erst had poured a tide
Full, fresh and free of passion and of pride,
Shuts down into itself its silent woes,
And locks its feelings in a stern repose,

And drains that last sad solace from despair,
Where nought remains to hope, there's nought to
fear,—

Accepts no comfort,—asks for no redress,—
Hath nought to wish, and nothing to confess.
Yet slight, at times, the sounds of outward grief,
That some might deem the sufferer found relief ;
Trust not such pause—the master-work of pride,
That feels most keenly what it strives to hide :

The storm of wreck may pass, but leaves a scene
Frightfully tranquil—sullenly serene :

Perhaps e'en more,—and (as, to mock its fall,
The gay flower flaunts upon the shattered wall)
So the crushed heart, that joy may never know,
Oft hangs her ensign on the lip and brow,
Till governed features, taught at length to lie,
Grow skilful in such fond hypocrisy :

Yet one, methinks, with aught of skill to trace
The mind's dark language on the written face,
Will scarce mistake for pleasure's tranquil rose
The brow that flushes, and the cheek that glows ;
Or deem untutored and untrained by art
The smile, that writhes above a broken heart.

But track the wretch afar from human ken,
And, would'st thou read his spirit—read it *then* !
Mark the breast struggling with its prisoned sigh,—
The pale lid drooping o'er the heavy eye,—
The cheek—late deeply dyed with feeling's hue,
Now worn, and sunk, and passionless, and blue ;
Then pause and tremble, ere thy footsteps dare
Intrude upon the orgies of despair.
Most hapless worshipper !—no ray for him,
However distant, and however dim,
Dawns on futurity ;—hope bleeding lies,
To that fell power the heart's last sacrifice ;
While the poor votary seeks no boon to gain
Save the sad privilege of fostering pain.”—

—“ Oh cease ! my lyre, Oh cease ! thy wailings
drear

Fright thy poor minstrel's inexperienced ear :
Or teach him,—if thy power avail thee aught
'Gainst woe undreamed of, till thyself had taught,—
Teach him where soothing balm may yet be found,
To staunch that bosom's suicidal wound,—
To snatch the spirit from its own fell power,—
To calm its wildest, cheer its saddest hour.”

“ Ha ! the dull dense clouds are breaking,
Slowly—slowly—slowly into light away !—
And my mental sense is waking,
Dazzled by a brighter ray,
Than e’er, the east with glory streaking,
Glanced from the opening eyes of day.”

“ Is ¹⁵ it come ?—that glimpse of Heaven,—
For which my soul so long hath striven,
Diving for lore obscure and high
In the darkling depths of prophecy ?
Avaunt ¹⁶ thee, fiend ! the woman’s seed shall tread
On the fierce terrors of the serpent’s head.”

“ I know him by the light he giveth ;—
I know that my Redeemer liveth ;—
He shall stand upon the earth,
Godlike in his mortal birth ;
In Him the sons of sorrow shall find rest,
And all the nations of the world be blest.”

“ Yes, ¹⁷ I know him from afar—
Israel’s sceptre—Jacob’s star—

For, like him on Zophim's brow,
Him of the gifted eye,
I shall see him, but not now,—
Behold him, but not nigh."

" Be it so !—on other eyes
Let the promised One arise,
While mine own are curtained deep
In their last and soundest sleep :
Enough for me, what Hope sublime
Can to her humble child allow ;
Enough !—anticipating time,
She feels him and adores him now."

" Wake then, my lyre !—give all thy passion scope !
Thy theme is peace—thine inspiration hope.
Say ¹⁸ to the slaves of woe, ' Return, and prove
A father's kindness in a God of love ;
Return to Him, whose mild and happy reign
Ye fled, to serve your dæmon god of pain,—
Him, ¹⁹ who shall taste the griefs he comes to heal,
And learn to comfort as he learns to feel ;
For you shall seek—for you shall burst the grave,—
A man to sympathise—a God to save.

Oh cease ye then from misery's bitter wine
To wring despair's tremendous anodyne !
Oh lift your parched and fevered lips above,
To the full well-spring of eternal love :
And all may yet be well ;—the present,—past
Be flung behind—the horizon brighten fast ;
E'en the dark clouds, that roll their rage away,
Catch Hope's own rainbow from the breaking day ;
And life, erewhile so dark and drear and dull,
Grow calm and fair and bright and beautiful ;
Or, should earth's dearest, loveliest ties be riven,
The soul spring nearer to her native Heaven,
Spurn the cold confines of her clay abode,
And ²⁰ find life—love—peace—glory—all—in God."

The minstrel's song is hushed :—but still his
fingers
Wander instinctively along the string,
Where parting melody yet fondly lingers
Like that, which on the waking sense will ring
Of one, who in his dreams holds communing
With dear familiar beings, 'rapt away
To Heaven before him on an angel's wing ;—
So sunk the farewell notes of David's lay,
Notes for the mind to hoard through many an after
day.

And so it fared with Saul :—that minstrel child
Had led his spirit back to scenes gone by ;
When if he tuned to woe his numbers wild,
'Twas but to borrow from her sullen sigh
Contrasted emphasis of extacy ;
Thus quiet softly stole o'er heart and brain,
And happy visions dawned on Fancy's eye,
And boyhood's fairy thoughts arose again,
Like dreams of buried friends, as lovely and as
vain.

Or it might be that prophecy's high tone,
Breathed from the young enthusiast's ardent
breast,
Woke ²¹ a long silent echo in his own—
A voice of days to come—such erst had blest
E'en him with promise of a future rest :—
Howbeit,—when paused the song, the monarch
seemed
Like one from sleep aroused, and all possessed
With phantasies of bliss, that still he deemed
Objects of sight and sense, nor knew that he had
dreamed.

—Me lists not to pursue the tale of woe—
How the dark dæmon came and came again,
And fled as oft before the genuine glow
Of piety, that warmed the shepherd's strain.
But let not the high moral warn in vain,—
That never word, by heaven-caught genius spoken
Can heal the thunder-stroke of mental pain,
Leaving of its black wound no dismal token,
Till God himself shall bind the heart himself hath
broken.

N O T E S.

¹ 1 Sam. xv. 23. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

² 1 Sam. xv. 12. Saul came to Carmel.

³ 1 Sam. xvi. 14. An evil spirit *from the Lord* troubled him.

⁴ 1 Sam. x. 23, 24. When he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people, from his shoulders and upward : And Samuel said to all the people, " See ye him, whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people."

⁵ 1 Sam. xi. 1—11.

⁶ 1 Sam. xv. 1—9.

⁷ Bethlehem is situate upon two opposite heights, divided from each other by a narrow valley, through which a branch of the Eshcol flows.

⁸ A slight poetical liberty has been taken here ;—the Scripture history implies that David was sent for by Saul's express desire :—It may not, however, be altogether inadmissible to suppose that, in the paroxysm of his disorder, this circumstance was forgotten.

⁹ 1 Sam. xvi. 12. He was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to.

¹⁰ The Psalms contain several addresses to the harp, as though it could sympathize with its master's feelings : to this circumstance the structure of the following ode owes its origin.

¹¹ No person, who has read the Psalms, will fail to have observed that David had as keen a sense of the various forms of inanimate Nature, as he had of the fluctuating feelings of its animate and reasoning creatures.

¹² Baal—the chief deity among the Phœnicians and Canaanites. He appears to have united the characters of the Jupiter and Apollo of European mythology.—CALMET's *Dictionary*.

¹³ Astaroth or Astarte—the Eastern Venus.—CALMET's *Dictionary*.

¹⁴ Several passages in the book of Job contain very similar ideas to those, which these lines attempt to convey.

¹⁵ The whole book of Psalms affords proof of the study, which its author had bestowed on the then-existent Scriptures. The 119th in particular evinces the delight he experienced in such investigation.

¹⁶ Psalm xci. 13. "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder:" The verses immediately preceding this were applied by the devil to Christ; nor did Christ object to such an application. It would be possible to refer to passages in the Psalms, which seem to allude to the other prophecies mentioned. But as no one will deny that a clearer insight into the times of the Messiah was permitted to David than to any of his predecessors, it has been deemed unnecessary to select citations, that may possibly be allusive to bygone predictions.

¹⁷ Numbers xxiv. 17. "I shall see him, but not now—I shall behold him, but not nigh.—There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel."

¹⁸ No part of the Old Testament bears any proportion to the Psalms, in recommending the sufferer, under any circumstances of trial, to God, as the giver of *spiritual* comfort.

¹⁹ David, as much or more than any of the prophets, dwells upon the sufferings and humiliation of Christ, but he speaks not less distinctly of his resurrection and glorification.

²⁰ Psalm lxii. 7.

²¹ 1 Sam. x. 6 and 10—"The Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied." The contrast between this passage and xviii. 10 of the same book is worth observing.

THE PLAGUE STAYED.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1832.



THE PLAGUE STAYED.

AND HE STOOD BETWEEN THE DEAD AND THE LIVING—

AND THE PLAGUE WAS STAYED.

Numbers xvi. 48.

HE stood between the living and the dead!—

Dead men—dead multitudes!—they lay along
Even as the blast had struck them—hoary head

And manly form and features soft and young :

Seemed they to heedless glance a pilgrim throng,
Halting for noontide rest upon the heath,

O'erwearied with the morning's travel long ;

But from the peopled plain there came no breath—
No stir—no voice—they slept the long last sleep of
death.

Yet lurked unquenched the signs of living passion
On knitted brow, in fixed and glassy eye,
Scowling the parted spirit's last expression
Of wrath or pride, that scorned in death to die ;
And the lip curled, as its expiring sigh
Had burst in curses ;—'twas a fearful sight,
And strange as fearful ; for no foe was nigh :
None saw the uplifted arm,—none heard it
smite :—
And yet an host lay felled beneath its shadowy
might.

Yes—he who stood beside the scattered dead
Had seen the grim destroyer :—seen it come
Even from Jehovah's presence :—on it sped
Travelling in dust and darkness ;—and the
bloom
Withered in Nature's check, as if the tomb
Had breathed on it,—herb and tree and flower
Shrivelled and drooped beneath the hot Simoom,
And all was sad and silent in that hour,
The verdure of the field,—the music of the bower.

He saw it enter the tumultuous camp,
And strike such sullen stillness, as doth brood
Over the Northern Ocean, when the cramp
Of frost is on its billows.—He had sued
To Israel's God, before whose shrine he stood
Strong in the might of innocence alone,
Appealing from the rebel multitude :
The appeal was heard ; — God had avenged his
own ;
And there he gazed secure upon his foes o'er-
thrown.

He was their priest ;—¹ upon his breast he bare
Their names before his God,—and morn and
even
Poured forth for them the glowing breath of prayer,
Winning down blessings from propitious heaven :
—But Envy with her serpent arts had striven
To warp the vulgar mind, that round and round,
Like feather upon faction's gale, is driven,—
And now would hurl the mitre to the ground
Which erst Jehovah's self on Aaron's brow had bound.

Unfaithful multitude!—but where the fool
E'er dreamed of faithful multitudes,—nor knew
That echo of all lies, the base-born tool
Of all who stoop to use them? But to few
Shewed they such change of theirameleon hue
As to the brother-chiefs, whose pastoral hand
Had led them safe their life-long wanderings
through,
To the fair confines of yon flowery land,
That ever smiled like Hope across those fields of
sand.

They strove against the delegates of Him
Who wrapped in clouds to Sinai's summit came,
Riding upon the fire-winged Seraphim,
And the huge mountain's adamantine frame
Shook while the thunder-clap pronounced His
name.
They strove—vain reptiles! one indignant glance
² Looked them to ashes from that eye of flame,—
One touch of that dread finger from its stance
Unfixed the rooted rock, and burst the earthquake's
trance.

Where then thy taunts, proud Korah?—were they
 blent

With that despairing and tumultuous yell,—
With man's deep groan and woman's shrill lament,
 ³ As the earth gaped, and sucked them quick to
 Hell?

—Is't not enough? will folly yet rebel,—
And call for sterner teaching, and require
 More wrath to scourge the tribes of Israel,—
And bid the pestilence with havoc dire,
Complete the dreary work of earthquake and of fire?

Yes! still the people murmured; and it came—
 The dæmon of the plague—in contrast dread
With earthquake's rending crash and roar of
 flame,—
It came in ghastly stillness;—o'er each head
It passed unseen—unheard—and left them dead.
But wherefore stands the injured Aaron now
 Gazing upon the wreck before him spread,
While deep emotion softens o'er his brow
Unlike the scowl of wrath, or triumph's conscious
 glow?

Meekly he stands,—his full benevolent eye
Pleading with earnest eloquence for those
Who shrunk affrighted as the blight passed by :
“ Pardon them, Lord,” he cries,—“ forgive my
foes,
As I forgive them !” from his censer flows
Unearthly fragrance through the tainted air ;
And, as the mingled sacrifice arose,
The plague was stayed !—stayed in its mid career !
It might not pass the man who crossed its path with
prayer.

’Tis a strange history ! but stranger yet
Stands on the page by heavenly truth imprest,
Telling of wider mischief that beset
The total race of Earth—a moral pest,
That soiled the fountain of man’s guileless breast,
And reared its death-spot on his glorious brow—
The brow where God’s own image shone con-
fest,—
And crushed and silenced with one ruthless blow
The beauty and the bliss that smiled or sang below :

And Earth became a desert—a dead limb

Of the great Universe, that far and wide
Basked in the smile of God, and poured to
Him

Of joy and praise a full unebbing tide :

Hell laughed from all her caverns, to deride
The victims of her guile : † and none was found

To plead the cause of man :—he lay and died
Helpless and hopeless, for the blasted ground
Yielded no balm to cure the spirit's mortal
wound :

Till One who on his Father's breast reclined

In unity of Godhead, combated
Singly the fell destroyers of mankind :

He fought and conquered !—but his robe was red
With his heart's blood :—not vainly was it
shed.—

A world is saved !—her foes are backward driven !

He stood between the living and the dead,
And stayed the plague :—and to the lyre of
Heaven

Another song is tuned,—another chord is given.

A world is saved !—but not, alas ! at once
Restored to primal beauty,—when the song
That heralded her birth found sweet response
Within her children's bosom, and their tongue
Echoed it back to Heaven. We muse along
Her peopled plains, and on the listening ear
Woe breathes its wail,—amid the giddy throng
We start to meet the spectral form of care,
And peace stands far aloof, and murder's arm is
bare.

Still lurk the baffled dæmons—fain to win
Some portion of the prey so late their
own ;—
Still prowls abroad the rank disease of sin,
Working unseen in breast of hermit lone,—
Or crushing nations from a tyrant's throne,—
Or maddening red sedition's carnival
With shouts of liberty,—that binds anon
Its victim-votaries in an heavier thrall.—
Sin kills in various guise—but kills alike in all.

And must this last for ever?—No!—again
Jehovah's first-born upon earth shall stand
Between the multitude that sin hath slain,
And those himself hath saved—His faithful band :
Again—and for eternity—His hand
Shall part the living from the dead, and high
The voice of general joy in chorus grand
Shall peal its thunder through the echoing sky ;
For sin shall smite no more—and death itself shall
die.



N O T E S.

¹ Exodus xxviii. 15—21. And thou shalt make the breast-plate of judgment with cunning work ; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it ; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. Four-square it shall be being doubled : a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof. And thou shalt set in settings of stones, even four rows of stones : the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle : this shall be the first row. And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper ; they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, every one with his own name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.

² Numbers xvi. 35, And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

³ Numbers xvi. 33. They and all that appertained unto them went down *alive* into the pit, and the earth closed upon them.

⁴ Isaiah lix. 16. He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor.



ST. PAUL AT PHILIPPI.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1833.



ST. PAUL AT PHILIPPI.

. . . τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον εἶρε Θεός.
τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

EURIP.

PART I.

THE VISION.

I.

MIDNIGHT!—the moon hath climbed the steep,
And looks o'er Ida's hill ;
Tracking in light the mazy sweep
Of Simoïs' slender rill :
And from the mountains to the deep,
All fragrant in its dewy sleep,
The Troad's plain is still !

The Troad !¹—Time and Change have sped,—
Her pride and power have vanished,
 Like sunset splendour fleeting !
Nought now is left her but the river
That dances on as blythe as ever,
And lofty Ida's summits hoar,
And the great sea's eternal roar,
 Advancing or retreating,
That seem, as on the ear afar,
It falls so deep and regular,
 The pulse of Nature beating.

II.

But Time and Change may wreak their worst ;
And still as freshly as at first,
The blind old harper's² spells of power—
A glorious and immortal dower—
 To yon proud clime belong !
And first must sink dark Ida's hill,
Rush upward to its fount the rill,
Old Ocean's mighty pulse be still,
Ere pilgrim, as he wanders by,
Shall slight with cold or careless eye
 The land of war and song.

III.

Not mindless³ of the lore that erst
The visions of his boyhood nursed,—
Not mindless of the charm that lies
In old romantic histories,—
The charm that, while the minstrel's strain
Woke memory of the past again,
And breathed old Scio's rocks among
The music of Ionian song,
In tranced and mute attention held
The hero and the sage of eld,—
Was he who wandered forth to try
The quiet of that midnight sky,
 And mark its planets shine,
And the sweet moonlight o'er the sea,
That slept beneath so tranquilly,
 Its chain of silver twine,—
The man whose loved and honoured name
May save,—if aught can save from shame,—
 This lowly lay of mine.

IV.

A warrior he !—but not like those
Whose bones along that shore repose ;

Wild men,⁴ whose savage mood
Held foremost of their stormy joys
The battle of confused noise
And garments rolled in blood :
He fought !—but silently and lone :
A viewless helmet fenced his head ;
No blow was struck !—no blood was shed !
And yet, in deadly fight,
The soldier of the cross prevailed
O'er mightier foe than ever quailed
To mortal skill or might !

v.

In childhood and in youth the same,
Small zest had he for glee or game ;
And Pleasure's soft and syren call
Passed powerless o'er the mind of Paul.
Not that the youthful sage's mind
Abjured communion with his kind ;
Howe'er he shunned the common crowd,
He friendship's sacred claim allowed :
But most at midnight's silent hour,
When spirits of the dead have power
Upon the lonely man,

And whisper strange and solemn things,
And prompt to high imaginings,
And the young fancy's wild harp-strings

 With shadowy fingers span,—
He loved, in converse uncontrolled,
To commune with the great of old ;—
To dream over Isaiah's song,
And think that time must bring ere long

 The promised boon of Heaven ;
And Judah, then no more forlorn,
Hail her Messiah's natal morn,
And cry " To us a child is born !
 To us a son is given !"

VI.

The child was born !—but still the same

 Was Judah's hapless lot :
She had disowned her Saviour's claim ;
Branded with infamy his name ;
And, though ⁶ unto his own he came,

 His own received him not.
Yea, Paul denied him too !—he stood
Eager to dip his hands in blood,—

The blood of that poor friendless few,
Who, to their murdered Master true,
 Were proud to share his fate :
But Heaven forbade :—a voice of fear,⁷—
 A light than mid-day sun more clear
Arrested in its fierce career
 The persecutor's hate :
He saw ! he heard !—the truth at once,
Borne inwards like the lightning's glance,
 Upon his conscience beamed :
And from that hour ⁸ he held at nought
Wealth, fame, and life, and bravely fought
The Christian's martyr-fight, and taught
 The faith he once blasphemed.

VII.

For this,⁹ in cold and nakedness,
 In toil and poverty,
In perils in the wilderness,
 In perils in the sea,
His faith and courage never failed ;
 But calm and undismayed
He stood where open foes assailed,
 Or falser friends betrayed.

Soft Cyprus' sons ¹⁰ around him throng,
And stay the dance and hush the song,
 To list the truths he taught :
From him the roving clans and rude
Of Yemen's mountain solitude ¹¹
 The lore of life have caught.

VIII.

And now from Asia's furthest verge
 He frequent turns his eyes,
Where Lemnos' hills from out the surge
 In shadowy masses rise :
He saw the sun salute that even
 Those mountains of the west,
And leave his mantle bright from heaven
 Upon their swarthy breast :
E'en thus, he thought the Gospel-star
Arose in Eastern climes afar ;
 But all, as on it passed,
From Tyre to Troy its light confess,
Till haply it may stoop to bless
 The western world at last.

IX.

Was it the murmur of the wave,—
The whisper of the wind,
That thus in solemn language gave
The musings of his mind ?
“ Come o’er and help us ! ”—’twas a cry
Deep-breathed and low and faint,
A strange and mournful symphony
Of welcome and complaint !
He turned :—a form arrests his sight,—
The Macedonian kirtle white,¹²
The Grecian brow of gloom,—
And, pointing to the further shore,
In tones more earnest than before,
It tells its message, “ Come ! ”

X.

Pity ! sweet seraph ! whatsoe’er
The garb thy gentle form may wear,
So tenderly and deeply dear
To this dark world of ours,—
Whether, of regal wealth possessed,
Thy name and sway be widely blest,
Or, simply clad in russet vest,

Thou lend'st thy humbler powers ;
Comfort thyself hast proved to speak,—
Despair's dun tempest-cloud to break,
And dew the dry and rigid cheek

With soul-reviving showers ;
But, dear and welcome as thou art
To the poor grief-o'erburthened heart,
Not half thy loveliness is seen,
Till, catching pure devotion's mien,
Thou liftest up thy brow serene

To thy great Sire above ;
Bidding the guilty soul draw near,
And pour her sorrows in His ear
Whose chosen name is Love.

XI.

Oh, 'twas a sight which angel-eyes
Beheld with all unwont surprise !
And every golden chord was still,—
And widely an electric thrill

Through Heaven's bright regions ran ;
While Pity from the eternal throne
Led down Jehovah's awful Son,

And reft away each starry gem
That bound creation's diadem,
And laid the robe of glory by,
And sent essential Deity .

 To veil his light in man !
'Tis finished ! Hell hath fought in vain !
'Tis finished ! Death himself is slain !
The eternal gates expand again !
Immanuel reascends the skies,
Fresh from his dreadful sacrifice !
But Pity caught the parting word,
That fell from her ascending Lord :
She marshals forth his chosen band,
 To tell the triumphs he had won ;
And bids them speed from land to land
 The tidings of salvation on.

XII.

She raised the phantom form that stood,
And beckoned Paul across the flood ;
Her's was the mournful message sent
From the dark western continent ;—
Full well the Apostle knew the sign,
And hailed with joy the voice divine :—

He calls his friend ;¹³ for one dear breast
The glow of kindred zeal confessed.—
Farewell to Asia ! from their eyes
Headland and cliff receding flies ;
E'en Ida's summits dimly blue
Melt into heaven's aëreal hue :
And proudly on the vessel fares,
As conscious of the freight she bears ;
The sunshine laughed upon the sea,—
The winds sung forth their noisy glee ;
And Nature's eye and Nature's voice
Bade man, her sentient child, rejoice.

XIII.

Awhile the gallant ship divides
The Hellespont's ¹⁴ opposing tides,
That pours its current dark and strong,
Like unreturning time, along ;
Then swift she cuts the narrow seas
'Twixt Imbros' isle and Chersonese ;
And soon beneath the evening skies
The Samothracian hills ¹⁵ arise :
Rests the rough sailor on his oar,
And bows him to the sacred shore :

Vain homage !—but the eastern gale
Is freshening in the swelling sail ;
E'en now emerging far a-lee
The snowy peaks of Rhodope,
Relieved against the pale grey sky,
Have caught the morning's rosy dye ;
And seem in giant ranks to stand
The beacons of a fairy land :
Anon the clearer light displays
The wild and varied coast of Thrace ;
Abdera's ancient towers ¹⁶ are past,
And Nestus, with impetuous haste
Bearing amid the salt sea foam
The freshness of his mountain home ;
While eastward, smiling in repose,
Green Thasos ¹⁷ like a garden glows.

XIV.

But not Abdera's ancient towers,
Nor Thasos' trelliced fruit and flowers
The Ocean-wanderer may detain ;
Forward the galley bounds amain !
Timing his stroke to barbarous song,
The rower speeds his task along :

A shout from shore salutes his ears :
At length his port—his home appears,
Where, looming through the twilight grey,
Neapolis¹⁸ o'erlooks the bay !
There are blythe faces in the ship,
 Glad voices on the strand !
And soon warm lip is pressed to lip,
 And eager hand to hand ;
The husband seeks the wife's embrace ;
 And she, with tears of joy,
Hath lifted to his father's face
 Their bright and blooming boy.

XV.

Two only of that happy crew
All friendless from the shore withdrew :
They saw the multitude rush by ;
They heard their welcome pealing high ;
And silently they turned away ;—
 For ah ! it pains the heart
The general rapture to survey,
 In which it owns no part.
With them we quit the joyous throng,
To trace their weary path and long,

While night around them falls ;
Until, o'erspent and travel-worn,
We hail with them, at peep of morn,
Philippi's stately walls.¹⁹

XVI.

Here pause we ! for the faltering Muse,
Ere further venture she pursues,
Craves respite and delay :
But he, who deigns a patient ear,
How sped those pilgrims twain shall hear
In the succeeding lay.

PART II.

THE COUNCIL.

I.

BOUND up amidst the thousand ties
Of man's mysterious sympathies
Is that strange feeling, that hath birth
While, gazing on our parent Earth,
The spirit ²⁰ to itself transfers
The sunshine or the gloom of hers.
Who hath not felt the peace that lies
On fields that smile 'neath summer skies?
Who to the eternal hymn of ocean
Responds not with as pure devotion?
Nor drinks a joy of sterner mood
From rugged hill or pathless wood?
Oh Nature, at thy bosom nursed,
Might I once more thy features see!
And taste the bliss I tasted erst,

And be as I was wont to be ;
And slake my spirit's fever thirst
For silence, solitude, and thee !
Might I but quit the sunless town,
On mountain-peak or heathery down,
By sea or shore, in wood or wold,
High converse with thy charms to hold !

II.

Vain wish !—and haply worse than vain !
Thou mayst not mingle with a strain,
That tells of one whose heart was given
In single sacrifice to Heaven ;
Who felt an inborn glow illumine
Each path of languor and of gloom,
And every selfish love resign'd,
To speed the welfare of mankind !
His name that consecrates my lay
Should chide each murmuring thought away.

III.

And yet, methinks, that holy man
Well pleased Creation's page would scan ;

And loved ²¹ in Nature's beauteous face
Her Maker's lineaments to trace :
For this he fled the noisy street,
The balm of evening's breath to greet,—
To sun him in the smile that glowed
 From yonder western sky,
And half forget the dark abode
 Of man and misery.

Soft and sweet are the sounds that then
Steal out from copse-wood fold and glen,
Those mellow voices that commingle
 With the small brooklet's silver song
That, dancing down o'er rock and shingle,
 Carols its happiness along.

IV.

But sadly Paul addressed his friend,—
“ Hear'st thou that vesper-hymn ascend,
Pealing into the radiant skies
It's pure and sinless sacrifice ?
Alas, to miss those strains among
The accents of the human tongue !”
“ Nay,” Silas cried, “ e'en now, methought,
Echoes of gentlest speech I caught !

And list again ! more sweet and clear
They melt upon my listening ear :
'Tis woman's voice—that liquid tone
An angel might not blush to own,—
Oh that an angel's theme were given
To notes so harmonized with heaven !
But haste we thither ! not in vain
Is breathed on high that votive strain :
The heart that owns devotion's power,
In such a scene, at such an hour,
Needs but a glimpse of clearer light
To guide its wandering homage right."

v.

'Twas a lone spot,²² that shrine of prayer !
Some river-nymph's deserted haunt,
Whose sacred springlet, diamond clear,
Welled bubbling from its rocky font :
And near, all lovely in decay,
A little shrine and altar lay :—
Aye lovely !—though the Grecian maid
No more in summer spoils arrayed
The light Ionian colonnade,—

For Nature's wild and simple taste
Had well those withering gifts replaced ;
Perennial chaplets court the breeze,
Festooned along the crumbling frieze,—
Or, climbing up each shattered shaft,
Gaily the purple blossoms laughed,—
Or from the walls peeped shy between
The ivy's everlasting green.

VI.

A moment paused the pilgrim twain
Upon the threshold of the fane :
A moment, fixed as by a spell,
They listened to the choral swell ;
And oh, how wakened memory's chords
Made answer to those thrilling words ;—

PSALM.

STROPHE.

How lovely ²³ is thy dwelling-place,
O Lord our God !
Our spirit longs and faints to trace
The courts thy saints have trod.

ANTISTROPHE.

The sparrow and the swallow there
Have found a nest :
Ah, why are we forbid to share
That holy place of rest ?

EPODE.

The great and holy One ²⁴ on high
Inhabiteth eternity,
Nor needs a human shrine :
Yet, Spirit, boundless as thou art,
Within the meek and contrite heart
Thy presence deigns to shine !

VII.

'Twere long to tell what greeting passed,
And how the twilight hours fled fast,
And still, with eager eye and ear,
That simple band pressed round to hear ;--
And how the Apostle wove
With whatsoc'er in woman's breast
Wakes deep and tender interest
His wondrous tale of love. —

He told how in that awful hour
Of Satan's brief permitted power,
When Vengeance on her victim's head
Her sevenfold vials sternly shed,
When foes the hand of menace shook,
And friends betrayed, denied, forsook,
Then woman, meekly constant still,
Followed to Calvary's fatal hill ;—
Yes, followed where the boldest failed,
Unmoved by threat or sneer ;
For faithful woman's love prevailed
O'er helpless woman's fear.

VIII.

In sorrow ²⁵ and in peril tried,
She was the last to quit his side ;
And, when the bloody scene was closed,
And low in dust her friend reposed,
The first was she to seek his tomb,
With balm of Araby's perfume :
She fondly thought that honoured form
To rescue from the loathsome worm ;
And little dreamed, how death in vain
Had cast his adamantine chain

O'er one, who came his might to quell
Even in his gloomiest citadel :—
And high reward her zeal hath won :—
“ Woman !” she started at the tone :—
“ Mary !” she turned—beheld—adored—
'Twas he to life and her restored !

IX

Thus on the pure and patient mind,
Quiet in joy, in grief resigned,
Fraught with rich blessing from above,
Beams the benignest smile of love ;
E'en as the lake's unruffled breast
Makes pillow for the sunbeam's rest,
While waves, in wild disorder driven,
Roll dark beneath the clearest heaven.
Oh woman ! though thy fragile form
Bows like the willow to the storm,
Ill-suited in unequal strife
To brave the ruder scenes of life ;
Yet, if the power of grace divine
Find in thy lowly heart a shrine,
Then, in thy very weakness strong,
Thou winn'st thy noiseless course along ;

Weaving thy influence with the ties
Of sweet domestic charities,
And softening haughtier spirits down
By happy contact with thine own.

X.

Yes! all were blest, whose every sense
Drank in the heaven-taught eloquence :
For, ah, my feeble strain doth wrong
To speech so liquid and so strong,
Bearing the willing soul along

 Upon its powerful stream ;
Yet one an holier bliss confessed,—
One, to whose meek and placid breast
No human eloquence addressed

 The great Apostle's theme.
God opened Lydia's heart ²⁶ to feel
And bow beneath His own appeal ;—
He cleared the mists of doubt away,
Poured in fair Truth's celestial day,
And all the trembling soul subdued
To hope, and love, and gratitude.
Not idle were the tears that glistened,
As silently she sat and listened,—

Such streams as fancy bids to flow
At tale of visionary woe,—
They issued from the warm heart's spring,
Affection's earnest offering,
And told her speechless thanks to Heaven
For mercy found and sin forgiven.

XI.

When all their homeward way had ta'en,
She lingered in the holy fane ;
And humbly urged her kind request,
“ Oh, were it worthy ²⁷ of such guest,
Deign, holy pilgrims, deign to share
My quiet roof and homely fare !”
And there they sojourned, pleased awhile
To bask in friendship's grateful smile :
How sweet at morn or evening's close
The mutual prayer and praise arose !
What thoughts of heavenly peace had birth
In converse round that happy hearth !
And when on each devoted head
The pure baptismal stream was shed,
The Eternal Spirit winged its flight,
To seal and bless the solemn rite !

In sooth that home was hallowed ground ;
Hope spread her rainbow wings around,
And cheered with ever-smiling face
The adopted family of grace.

XII.

Alas, too soon we turn our sight
From visions of such calm delight !
Our notes of rapture, faint and low,
Sink in prophetic strains of woe :—
 The earthquake groans from under
 Old Pindus' rocky breast ;—
Chimari's brow of thunder²⁸
 More awful frowns invest ;
Along the lightning's path,—
 Upon the whirlwind's wing
Gigantic forms of wrath
 Abroad are journeying ;
Where, untrod by mortal feet,
 Dodona's forests stand,
Grim in midnight council meet
 The spirits of the land.
Full many a bold or wily plan
Was spread before that stern divan,

To quench the orient ray of light
That dawned upon their realms of night ;
Till he of Delphi's crested hill,
Who long had swayed his votaries' will,
By weaving deep the specious lie
In oracle and prophecy,
Awhile the general wrath controlled,
And thus his dubious counsel told.

XIII.

“ Dread potentates, the hour is come
When we must battle for our home :
Time was, that we might journey forth
From east to west, from south to north,
And still, where'er our course we steered,
Some symbol of our sway appeared :
Alike by savage and by sage,
By men of every land and age,
With various rite, 'neath various name,
Our influence was confessed the same,
The Indian knelt by Gunga's fountains,—²⁹
The Persian on his sacred mountains,—
Greece reared to us her gorgeous dome,—
To us hath bowed almighty Rome,—

And the cold Celt, in northern climes,
To us would consecrate his crimes.
Alas! those palmy days are past!
Truth reasserts her throne at last!
Truth, we so stoutly held at bay,
Pours in, at last, the unwelcome day!
No more in narrow bounds confined
She struggles with the recreant mind,
But sends her heralds to proclaim
At once her triumph and our shame!"

XIV.

"We've proved how vain is open force
To check the bright invader's course;
How vain to strive with him whose eye
O'erlooks the scrolls of Destiny;³⁰
Henceforth be humbler schemes our care,
The power we may not crush, to share.
Thither, where first on Grecian ground
The rival God a shrine hath found,
Thither myself will speed, to try
Each aid my ancient wiles supply;
Veiling in flattering speech my wrath,
Myself will dog the Apostle's path;

And borrow woman's form and tone,
The messenger of heaven ³¹ to own.
Thus enmity, in smiles concealed,
Shall gain the power it seems to yield ;—
Our empire thus confirmed will stand,
And Jove and Jesus share the land."

XV.

" But if—for ah, I know too well
That man hath power to counter-spell
The best laid stratagems of Hell,—
If, with unwonted terror shook,
I quail before his stern rebuke,
Cast we the specious mask aside,
And fairly be the battle tried !
Thou too ³² must prosper our design,
Pale Genius of the sunless mine !
'Tis thine to fire the callous priest,
Of every thrall, but thine, released,
Who smiles when simpler mortals pray ;
He serves the Gods—but serves for pay,
And, heedless if they bless or ban,
Make traffic of the soul of man :

But, when,—should hostile Truth prevail,—
His sordid hope of gain shall fail,
How loudly will he prate of zeal,
And feign, what he hath ceased to feel !
How will he spur the vulgar throng
To deeds of violence and wrong ;
And hurl to exile or to death
The teachers of the rebel faith !”

XVI.

Never ! upon your bootless craft
The Dweller of the heavens ³³ hath laughed—
Hath laughed to scorn your feeble rage,
That dares such frantic strife to wage !
What ?—will ye share the throne with Him,
When cherubim and seraphim
 With veiled eyes adore him ?
And think ye, haughty Gnomes, to shed
Destruction on the meanest head
Of mortal man, when God hath spread
 His sheltering pinions o’er him ?
Never !—Eternal truth is plight
To shield her injured servants’ right ;

Their faith's foundation ³⁴ standeth sure,
Long as those characters endure,
Sealed deep upon the living stone,
“ God knows, and will avenge his own.”—
As yon pure planet walks on high
In glory through the midnight sky,
The Christian holds his way serene,
Smiling on life's beclouded scene,
And making very darkness bright
With beautiful though borrowed light.

PART III.

THE PRISON.

I.

KNOW ye the hushed and awful still,
While the storm gathers on the hill ;
As if that cloud's portentous gloom
Were pregnant with Creation's doom ;
And Nature watched in mute suspense
The fiat of Omnipotence ?
There is no whisper on the breeze,—
 No ripple on the lake ;—
E'en the slight tremble of the trees
 No murmur seems to make.
It comes !—'tis past !—and hill and plain
Laugh into threefold light again !
The lake hath caught a clearer blue ;
The meadow wears a greener hue ;

And the glad earth and glowing skies
Are rife with thousand melodies.

II.

E'en thus, methinks, will rapture borrow
A brightness from the hour of sorrow ;
E'en thus our God at times will shroud
His smiles behind the darkest cloud ;
Awhile, all trembling and aghast,
We gaze ;—but, lo, the storm is past !
Away the murky vapours roll ;
Sunshine breaks in upon the soul !
Faith bids each lingering doubt be gone,
Hope lays her liveliest colours on,
And Joy, upon her eagle-wings,
Mounts through the golden sky, and sings.

III.

Seek we Philippi's towers once more :
The weary strife of day is o'er ;
And on the landscape and the town
The summer night sinks softly down ;
But still the tread of hurried feet
Resounds along the echoing street ;

And here and there with anxious face,
In vacant porch or market-place,
Dark groups are met to interchange
Conjecture vague and rumour strange.
“ I saw,” cried one, “ that stranger Jew !
His figure to its height he drew,
And turning on the sacred maid,
‘ Cease, lying spirit, cease !’ he said,
‘ I charge thee, in the name of One
‘ Thou know’st and must obey, begone !’
What name, in sooth, I cannot tell :—
Howbeit, with shrill unearthly yell,
It fled before the o’ermastering spell :
And ne’er, methinks, again will bless
Apollo’s virgin prophetess.”

IV.

“ Then rose the crowd’s discordant din ;
And Phœbus’ priests rushed wildly in ;
The stranger and his friend they caught,
And to the hall of council brought :
There, amid insult,³⁵ blows and blood,
Shorn of their power the captives stood,

Yet bravely stood ; I see e'en now
Their lofty, calm, undaunted brow :
I felt resistless pity rise,
To mark that host of enemies
Bearing the friendless men along
With whoop, and shout, and barbarous song,
To nerve them for to-morrow's doom
In yonder dungeon's inmost gloom."'
Then question rose, if Hell or Heaven
Such deep mysterious spell had given,—
A spell the very gods obeyed,
Yet powerless in its owner's aid.

v.

So deemed they.—Be it ours the while
To seek in that sepulchral pile
 The heroes of our lay !
Alas, their hapless plight expressed
How well their guardian's ³⁶ savage breast
Responded to the stern behest,
 Which gave them to his sway.
Chained to the damp and slimy floor,
That reeked and reddened with their gore,
In solitude and pain they wore

The dreary night away.
Aye, there the helpless body lies,
A bound and bleeding sacrifice !
But baffled malice vainly flings
Its fetter on the spirit's wings :—
 High music floats along³⁷
Those sullen regions of despair,
And their poor tenants start to hear,
Mellowed in cadence sweet and clear,
 The unusual burst of song.

SONG.

STROPHE I.

What change of time,³⁸ or place, or state
The spirit's love shall separate
 From Christ her Lord ?—
Shall tribulation, or distress,
Violence, want, or nakedness,
 Peril, or sword ?

STROPHE II.

Nay ! through Him³⁹ our soul adores,
We are more than conquerors !

Nay ! not all the powers that dwell
Or in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell,
Not height above, nor depth beneath,
Things present, future, life or death
Shall one single link remove
From the golden chain of love !

ANTISTROPHE I.

Therefore let our praise arise !
Therefore let our souls despise
 Disgrace and pain !
Our foes their deadly aim have missed !
They know not how to live is Christ,¹⁰
 To die is gain !

ANTISTROPHE II.

Yet, Lord, whene'er our race is run,
Our battle fought, our victory won,—
Whene'er in yonder realms of light,
We wear the martyr's robes of white,—
Oh, still thy gracious smile bestow
Upon thy struggling church below !
Thy future heralds deign to bless
With larger powers and more success,

Till Truth and Peace with mighty span
Embrace the family of man !

VI.

Was it Echo's mimic tone
Answered in that sullen groan ?—
Tremulous at first and low,—
Hark ! it louder seems to grow
With continuous rolling sound,
Like thunder uttered from the ground
It comes !⁴¹—it comes !—the dungeon reels
Beneath the earthquake's fiery wheels !
Back recoils with grating jar
Massy bolt and serried bar !
Free each wondering prisoner stands,
Lifting to heaven his chainless hands :
Free !—they reckon not how or why,
Though death should come with liberty.

VII.

But one—the man of ruthless brow,
Grim tyrant of those realms of woe,
Had heard the fierce invader burst
The portals of his den accurst :

A moment ⁴²—and his desperate hand
Hath grasped the suicidal brand !
Was it his guardian angel spoke,
And midway stayed the deadly stroke ?
“ Forbear,” it cried, “ rash man, forbear !
Behold, thy prisoners all are here !”
Then trembling sprang he in ; for well
He knew the solitary cell,
Whence issued forth that warning call,—
He knew the deep-toned voice of Paul.

VIII.

You might have deemed that iron man
For refuge to his victims ran ;
For pale and anxious, “ Sirs,” cried he,
“ O whither can a wretch like me
For pardon and for safety flee ?”
“ Flee ?” answered Paul, a radiant smile
Lighting his toil-worn cheek the while,
“ Flee to the God who burst our chain,—
Flee to the Man for sinners slain ;
His power, His love can safety give
To thee—to all.—Believe and live.”

IX.

Spirit ! who from primæval night
Didst call forth beauty into light ;
Not with a burst of awful splendor,
But smile of sunshine warm and tender ;
Hushing the waters wildly hurled
Above the rude chaotic world,
And beaming happiness and grace
On waking Nature's infant face,—
Spirit ! e'en thus the waves that roll
O'er the dark chaos of the soul
Shrink from thy radiant glance away ;
And, shining ⁴³ into perfect day,
Tinted with Heaven's ambrosial dyes,
Behold a new-born world arise !

X.

Can that be he that scowled of late,
The Cerberus of the dungeon gate ?
Whose heart, from human pity shielded,
Was harsher than the chains he wielded !
How changed the savage now !—his eye
Is softened into sympathy :

He raised those sufferers from the ground,
And washed and soothed⁴⁴ each festering wound ;
Then, as he meekly bent to hear
 His guests of heavenly mercy tell,
Down his rough cheek the unbidden tear,
 Large, warm, and bright, as childhood's,
 fell.

XI.

The morn is up !—her peaceful eyes
Peep coyly through the latticed skies .
But fled not with returning light
The memory of that awful night ;—
Early the trembling council ⁴⁵ sent
To the dark tower of punishment,
Giving strict charge without delay
To speed those ill-starred men away :
“ Nay,” Paul replied, ⁴⁶ with generous sense
Of falsely injured innocence,—
“ Heedless of Rome’s protecting name,
They yielded us unheard to shame :
E’en let themselves as suppliants come,
And publicly reverse their doom !”

XII.

They came ;⁴⁷—it irks the gentle Muse
To linger o'er each fond excuse,—
Smooth words from pride by terror wrung
Faltering on the reluctant tongue :
With languid eye and drooping plume
She turns her from those walls of gloom :
Away !—her ear hath caught a tone
With brighter themes in unison :

Yes, from Lydia's⁴⁸ lowly dwelling
Strains of solemn joy are swelling !
Strains that mock the aid of art,
The boundings of the happy heart.

HYMN.

Christians ! hail the blissful sight,
Brethren to our arms returning !
Sorrow may endure ⁴⁹ the night,
But joy cometh in the morning !
Faith hath triumphed in the fight :—
Prayer hath not been poured in vain :
Christians ! let us here unite
Hand and heart and voice again !

Seize the moments bright and fleeting
Seize the joy too quickly gone !
Scarce we taste the bliss of meeting
Ere the parting pang draws on.
Soon will Ocean's waves divide us,—
Many a plain and many a hill ;
But the soul, whate'er betide us,
Meets its kindred spirit still :—
Meets in mutual praise and prayer,
Friendship's chain to clasp anew :
Christians ! stay the bitter tear ;—
Parting hath no pang for you !
And, when life's brief course is done,
With the glorious Church above,
Body, spirit, all in one,
We shall taste the Heaven of love.
Gladly then to God we yield ye,—
Safe beneath His wings to dwell :
He shall comfort, guide and shield ye ;
Christian brethren, fare-ye-well !

NOTES.

¹ "They came down to Troas," probably to Alexandria Troas, a city a little to the south of the site of ancient Troy. Acts xvi. 8.

² Homer.

³ The speeches and writings of St. Paul afford evidence that he had, at some period of his life, studied the Greek Classics. He lived at a time when Greek literature was at its zenith in the Roman world.

⁴ "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood ; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." Isaiah ix. 5.

⁵ "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked : And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Eph. vi. 16, 17.

⁶ "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." John i. 11.

⁷ "At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me : and, when we were all

fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?" Acts xxvi. 13.

⁸ "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things," &c. Philip. iii. 7, 8.

⁹ "In perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." 2 Cor. xi. 26, 27.

¹⁰ Acts xiii. 4—12.

¹¹ Yemen: Arabia. "I went into Arabia, and returned again into Damascus." Gal. i. 17. This was Paul's first Apostolical journey, before he was introduced to the Apostles at Jerusalem.

¹² The dress of the Macedonians is not very unlike that of the Scottish Highlanders. The kilt, instead of being woven in various colours, is white.

¹³ It is thought, with much probability, that Luke, and perhaps Timothy, accompanied the Apostle on his first European journey. As, however, their names never occur in the narrative, the Author felt himself at liberty to suppose that Silas was the only companion of St. Paul.

¹⁴ The stream of the Hellespont bears always from the Propontis to the Ægean, and is perceptible as far down as Tenedos.

¹⁵ There is a high hill in Samothrace, visible from the plain of Troy. CLARKE'S *Travels*.

It was likewise held in high repute for sanctity, because there were celebrated the great mysteries of the Cabeiri. ὅστις δὲ τὰ Καβείρων ὄργια μεμύηται, τὰ Σαμοθρήκες ἐπιτελέουσιν,

πάραλαβόντες παρὰ Πελασγῶν, οὗτος ὤνῃρ οἶδε τὸ λέγω. HEROD.
ii. 51.

¹⁶ Μετὰ τὴν Νέσσον ποταμὸν πρὸς ἀνατολὰς, Ἀβδηρα πόλις,
ἐπώνυμος Ἀβδήρου, ὅν οἱ τοῦ Διομήδους ἵπποι ἔφαγον. STRABON.
Geograph.

It was a colony of Teians : and, according to Diodor. Siculus,
πόλιν ἐν ταῖς δυνατωτάταις οὔσαν τότε τῶν ἐπὶ Θράκης. Not a
vestige of this city now remains.

¹⁷ Virgil, Georg. ii. 91, mentions the Thasian vines as of ex-
cellent quality. Herod. vi. 46, gives an account of the gold
mines that were then worked in Thasos ; and which, together
with those of Σκαπτὴ Ὑλη on the Continent, were a great
source of wealth to its inhabitants. It has now quarries of ex-
cellent marble, not inferior to the Parian.

¹⁸ Now called Cavallo.

¹⁹ " The chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony." *Acts* xvi. 12.

²⁰ Crabbe, in " The Lover's Journey," espouses the converse
of this idea, viz. that Nature borrows from the mind of the
Spectator its brightness or its gloom. Crabbe is not wrong :
it is difficult to determine which is the more dependent, the
appearance of Nature upon the tone of the mind, or the tone
of the mind upon the appearance of Nature.

²¹ The perfections of invisible Deity are beheld through the
medium of His works, viz. His eternal power and Godhead.
Rom. i. 20.

²² " We went out of the city by a river side where prayer
was wont to be made." *Acts* xvi. 13. It is supposed that,
though there was no regular synagogue at Philippi, there was
a *προσευχή* frequented by a few women who were proselytes of
the gate. POOL'S *Synops. Crit.*

²³ " How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ! My
soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord.....

Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest, for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God !" Ps. lxxxiv. 1—3.

²⁴ " Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy ; I dwell in the high and holy place ;—with him also that is of an humble and a contrite spirit," &c. Isaiah lvii. 15.

²⁵ In the days of Christ himself, as has often been remarked, they were the last who left his cross, they were the first who sought his tomb. The sketch of St. Paul's address to the women has been borrowed from the Rev. H. Blunt's Lecture on that part of the Apostle's history. Part I. Lect. ix.

²⁶ " Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul." Acts xvi. 14.

²⁷ A slight liberty has been taken with the history, in making the invitation to Paul and Silas from Lydia precede her baptism.

²⁸ The Ceraunian mountains.

²⁹ The Ganges.

³⁰ The Gods of Heathen mythology confessed subjection to the will of a supreme being, whom they called Fate. This is curiously illustrated in the Pythian response to Cræsus, after his defeat by Cyrus. *Τὴν πεπρωμένην μοίρην ἀδύνατά ἐστι ἀποφυγέειν καὶ θεῶ . . . προθυμεομένου δὲ Αοξίῳ ὅπως ἂν κατὰ τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς Κροῖσου γένοιτο τὸ Σαρδίων πάθος, καὶ μὴ κατ' αὐτὸν Κροῖσον, οὐκ οἶόν τε ἐγένετο παραγαγεῖν μοίρας· ὅσον δὲ ἐνέδωκαν αὐταὶ ἠνύσατο, καὶ ἐχάρισάτο οἱ.* HEROD. i. 91.

³¹ " A certain damsel, possessed with a spirit of divination, met us ; which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying : The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." Acts xvi. 16, 17.

³² " And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas," &c. Acts xvi. 19.

³³ "He that sitteth in the Heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." Ps. ii. 4.

³⁴ "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure: having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Tim. ii. 19.

³⁵ "And the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them: And, when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison." Acts xvi. 22.

³⁶ "Charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." Acts xvi. 23, 24.

³⁷ "And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them." Acts xvi. 25.

³⁸ "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Rom. viii. 35.

³⁹ "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. viii. 37—39.

⁴⁰ "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Philip. i. 21.

⁴¹ "And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." Acts xvi. 26.

⁴² "And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do

thyself no harm ! for we are all here ! Then he called for light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved ? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house." Acts xvi. 27—31.

This passage, I believe, must suffer by a transfer into any other words. Its brevity and strength, are, I think, inimitable. I most painfully feel the utter insufficiency and unworthiness of my own paraphrase ; and, were it not that it was too important a part of the subject, I should certainly have been guided by Horace's hint,

——— quæ

Desperat tractata nitescere posse, relinquit.

⁴³ " The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. iv. 18.

⁴⁴ " And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes ; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Acts xvi. 33, 34.

⁴⁵ " And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go." Acts xvi. 35.

⁴⁶ " But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison ; and now do they thrust us out privily ? Nay, verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out." Acts xvi. 37.

⁴⁷ " And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates, and they feared when they heard that they were Romans : And they came, and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city. Acts xvi. 38, 39.

⁴⁸ " And they went out of the prison, and entered into the

house of Lydia : and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed." Acts xvi. 40.

⁴⁹ " Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Ps. xxx. 5.



J A C O B.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1834.



J A C O B.

“ Jacob was a plain man.”

GEN. xxv. 27.

“ I boast no song in magic’s wonder rife :
But yet, oh Nature ! is there nought to prize
Familiar in thy bosom-scenes of life ?”

CAMPBELL.

A DAY of many changes !—shower and sun,
In dubious conflict, oft have lost and won ;—
Now a long space of deep and settled gloom,
Now bursts the day-king from his shadowy tomb,
And the broad river and the cultured plain
Laugh in the luxury of light again.

A day of many changes !—but at length
The spirits of the clouds have spent their strength,
Driven from the empire of the upper world,
Their ranks are broken, and their banner furled ;
And scarce the ear, in faint vibration, feels
The distant roll of their retiring wheels.
'Tis evening's solemn hour !—the expectant West
Awaits the advent of her glorious guest ;
And fairy looms have broidered with vermilion
The gorgeous drapery of his proud pavilion ;
He walks to rest triumphant,—from his hair
Shedding down radiance through the amber air ;
As if resolved in lavish mood to pay
To Nature quittance for his long delay.
Brief reign as beautiful !—how quickly die
The splendors of that airy pageantry !
E'en as we gaze, the brilliant tints of even
Are melted in the blank abyss of heaven ;
And though, in close battalia ranked on high,
The countless armies of the night march by,
Their sheen, so coldly, tremulously bright,
Seems but the ghost of day's departed light.

All day an aged man with wistful eye
Had watched the aspect of that moody sky ;
As if each change on memory's mirror cast
Some imaged scene of joy or sorrow past :
Dim was his sight,—but not too dim to know
When the broad sunshine settled on his brow ;
He smiled, as though some inward sense had felt
The warmth and gladness in his spirit melt,—
An inward consciousness of peace divine,
Gilding the shadows of his day's decline :
Yea even the very clouds, that long had striven
To dim the lustre of that ray from heaven,
Were taught to bear the ensigns of its power,
And swell the triumph of its parting hour.

And some who watch'd him deemed at times there
stole

A brilliant emanation of the soul,
Shedding a pure effulgence, all its own,—
A charm to Nature's kindest smile unknown ;
As if his aged brow and tresses white
Emitted, rather than received, the light :
But, when the Sun, fast sinking to his rest,
Dipped his great disk behind the desert's breast,

A moment, dazzled by the level ray,
Those guardian friends had turned their glance away ;
And, when they gazed again, they scarcely knew
That face, so altered in its form and hue ;
Where not one trace of feeling lingered yet,—
The glory was eclipsed !—the soul was set !
Set to a world o'ercast with sin and sorrow,
To rise unclouded on a fairer morrow.

¹The last of the three Patriarchs !—none might
claim,
When he was not, that venerable name :
And though his numerous sons, a stalwart band,
Spread forth their tribes along the peopled land,
None rose to emulate the parent-mind ;—
It left no fellow to its worth behind.

There is a mystery in parting words—
A spell that sways affection's deepest chords,
And oft, when least expected, makes us start
At that Eolian music of the heart.

They were the offspring of his favorite child,
Who oft had Age of half its cares beguiled ;
And, by their Grandsire's couch, his latest day,
Watched life's last sands in brightness ebb away ;
They caught his parting words !—and, many a year,
Those tones will haunt remembering fancy's ear,—
Checking youth's glee, like that long, plaintive wail,
Which mingles with the night-bird's rapturous tale,
And soothing manhood's breast of stormy gloom
With a far music from beyond the tomb.

“ My children ! ”—thus he spake,—“ Could aught
detain

My spirit, half enfranchised of its chain,
Methinks, 'twould be the lingering love, whose sway
Yields not to time, and triumphs o'er decay ;
The love, that yearns, oh yet a little while !
To sun me in the brightness of your smile,
A little while to bid my heart rejoice
At the wild notes of childhood's happy voice ;
And nurse Hope's golden dreams, from hour to hour
Tending the promise of life's opening flower !

“ Yet wherefore wish ?—Ah why should I retrace,
With those I love, that wild and weary space ?
Why should I wait to see the clouds arise,
And blot the hopes of morning’s rosy skies ;
To see the cheek, where Mirth’s young dimples play,
Sink in the settled languor of decay ;
And the glad eye, as yet unknown to tears,
Lose all its brightness ’neath the blight of years ?
I was like thee, my Ephraim,—this worn face,
Where Time hath left so many a ruthless trace,
Thou scarce would’st deem, perchance, that it had
known

As smooth and fair a beauty as thine own.
I had a brother too,—mine eyes are dim,
But oft, Manasseh, in thy strength of limb,
Well framed in Nature’s sterner mould, to grace
Each hardy venture of the fight or chace,
Thy gallant bearing, and thy gladsome smile,
Thy heart that knows not and that fears not guile,
Whose fond devotion, on the present cast,
Neglects the future, and forgets the past,
E’en in thy voice, its accent and its phrase,
I mark the comrade of my early days.—

And the same fate is on thee—the decree,
That gave the birthright heritage to me,
Constrained my tongue, and swayed my hands to
shed
The first-born's blessing on his brother's head.

“ Alas ! my brother—as I lay alone
On the hard pillow of the desert stone,
Forced from my home, my happy home, to flee,
How turned my soul in bitterest thought to thee !
Together born ! together rocked to rest !
And fed and pillowed by the same dear breast !
Together !—how that word, in after years,
Unseals the heart-spring's unavailing tears !
I shed them then—how oft I since have shed
For friends—the absent—the estranged—the dead—
The partners of youth's joys, or childhood's mirth,
All gone ! and I am left alone on Earth.

“ My brother !—yes I wronged thee, and I date
From that sad hour, the darkening of my fate ;

For all was bright till then,—and thence begin
The shades of sorrow and the stains of sin.
How much I suffered for thy sake is known
To Him who knows the heart,—to Him alone :
But He is gracious ;—on that dreary night
I saw his glory, and I blest the sight ;
My spirit saw Him !—²saw the steps that rise
Up from this earth to yonder glowing skies,
Mountain on mountain, cliff on cliff sublime,
Such as no mortal step hath dared to climb,
Girdled with clouds and canopied with snows
Far into peerless light the Eternal peaks arose !
And up and down, from dizzy height to height,
Ethereal forms of beauty and of night
Sped like embodied lightning ; and, methought,
Mine ear at times unearthly music caught,
Sweet tones that spake of love—the voice of Him
Who stood amidst his host of Seraphim,
Listing the prayers they wafted from below,
The plaint of anguish and the groan of woe.

“ My fathers’ God ! I learned in happier days
To seek thy blessing, and to sing thy praise ;

In boyhood's hours, upon my parents' knee,
I trembling listened while they spake of Thee :
But then I saw Thyself, and every sense
Was hushed to deep but fearless reverence ;
I could not fear,—a message from above
Revealed thy name, and told me it was Love ;
There were no words, but thoughts of peace divine,
Breathed from thy spirit, and inhaled by mine :
That hour I proved, 'mid sorrow, want and care,
The power of faith, the prevalence of prayer ;
And since that hour, whatever ills assailed,
I often proved it, and it never failed ;
Bear witness, Peniel,³ how the livelong night,
Locked in the arms of more than mortal might,
I strove in strong endurance,—wearily,
Hour after hour, that heavy night toiled by,
And still he yielded not ;—my nerveless limb
Shrank to his touch ;—but yet I clung to him,
Till strength and breath had failed :—at length he
spoke,
—‘ Unhand me, mortal, for the day hath broke,’—
‘ Nay, Lord,’ I feebly cried, ‘ We part not so,
Except thou bless, I will not let thee go.’—

Again he spake,—my heart the accents hailed,—
‘ Rise!—thou hast power with God, and hast pre-
vailed.’

“ That morn my brother met me,—with dismay
I heard the tidings of his fierce array.
Long years had passed,—enough, methought, of time
To wipe away the memory of my crime ;
But I was rich,—my flocks extending wide
Whitened the banks of Jordan’s rushing tide,
And ill my peaceful shepherds might withstand
The mountain-chieftain and his armed band :
In sooth I feared—⁴ and fond precaution cast
To make the dearest front the peril last.
Alas for faith ! how soon, by danger driven,
The wavering soul unclasps her hold on Heaven !
Could I forget, while yet my limbs confessed
The touch that visionary hand impressed ?
But He did not forget,—my brother felt
Each angry purpose ’neath His influence melt.
We met, as brethren meet, who long have loved,
And long been parted :—how my heart was moved,

⁵ As to my outstretched arms that rugged man,
With all the warmth of boyish welcome, ran ;
As thoughts of old remembrance uncongealed
Those tears, so long—alas ! so sternly sealed :
I blessed him there ;—and there, with shame, re-
newed
To Bethel's God my vows of gratitude.

“ No marvel then, that to my brightening view
Too flattering Hope her fairest pictures drew ;
No marvel, that I dreamed of peace to come,
And all the quiet and the bliss of home,—
Days of light labour,—nights of peaceful rest,—
All I had sought so long,—so late possessed.
I gazed on those who soothed my toilsome youth
With woman's patience, tenderness, and truth,—
I gazed upon each dear and happy child,
And every brow returned my glance and smiled :—
Oh God ! within my very grasp was placed
The cup of rapture I was ne'er to taste.
A few short months,—and I was once again
The most unhappy of unhappy men.

⁶ My daughter !—let it pass !—whate'er thou art,
A father's blessing on thy broken heart ;
But *how* I loved thee !—thou wert passing fair,
With glowing cheeks, dark eyes, and glossy hair,
And a sweet smile, where once was wildly blent
All that is beautiful and innocent,
A picture limned in Nature's softest mood,—
But now all blotted o'er with tears and blood.

“ Dear children ! I have learned at length to know
The gain of grief,—the blessedness of woe ;
To feel that heavenly peace, vouchsafed alone
When all the blandishments of Earth are gone.
Yet long I struggled with the chastening rod,
Marvelling and murmuring at the ways of God,
Who seemed to shroud his smiles in wayward gloom,
⁷ And blight the hopes himself had bade to bloom ;
I know Him now !—and ah ! I know the heart,
That thus in mercy he ordained to smart,—
In mercy made each earthly prospect dim,
That it might centre all its love on Him.

“ Yet ’twas a bitter lesson—and e’en now
I feel the scars of that o’erwhelming blow,
Which, sudden as the lightning from above,
Blasted my paradise of earthly love.
Oh Rachel ! often had we prayed that Heaven
Would grant us children :—and the boon was given,—
The fatal boon, with bitterest sorrow rife !
Heaven gave the children, but removed the wife.—
Was it for this, all lovely as thou wert,
I won the treasure of thy virgin heart ?
For this, a menial ’mid thy father’s herd,
I bore the sickening pang of hope deferred ;
Bore what youth’s eager heart so hardly bears
In patient toil for two long weeks of years ?
There, as I gazed upon thy cold pale face,
E’er yet I yielded thee to Earth’s embrace,
How memory called her phantoms, till I seemed
To live again amid the scenes she dreamed ;
With torturing accuracy rose to sight
Each half forgotten moment of delight,—
The smile, that blessed me when I met thee first,
The hope, in solitude and silence nursed,
The whispered vow, that made my passion known,
The blush, that told I did not love alone,

The tones of fondness, as we wandered wide
In lingering converse by the meadow's side,
The bridal day, the conjugal caress,
The o'erflowing cup of mutual happiness,
The dear domestic charms, that soothed and cheered,
Doubled each joy, and every sorrow shared !
Again I gazed !—I could not choose but hope
That those sealed eyelids to my glance would open ;
I kissed her cheek ;—that touch the vision sped ;
And then I felt that joy and she were dead !

“ I sought my father's home ;—where she was
not,

It seemed a sad and solitary spot :
Howbeit, though all its early glow was lost,
Though torn from all it loved and valued most,
The heart, by instinct, like the widowed vine,
Sought some fresh object where its strings might
twine ;
And many offered :—but I scarce could bear
Another's image in my breast to wear,
Until at length to my despairing eyes
I saw her likeness in her son arise,—

Her first-born son ;—the eye, whose light was bliss,
The high clear brow,—the shadowy hair was his,
The smile, like sunshine upon roses thrown,
The deep and touching tenderness of tone ;—
I saw—I heard her !—from their icy chain
My chilled affections thawed to life again ;—
Thawed like the mountain stream, and swept away
The bounds of duty in its headlong sway.
Yes, Joseph ! madly I on thee bestowed
All that to man—half that to God I owed :
I felt no warmth—no energy in prayer,
Unless thy name was fondly blended there ;
I looked on forms that once my love had shared,
But owned no pleasure till thyself appeared.

“ This could not last ;—and Heaven and Earth,
alike

Wronged and insulted, raised the arm to strike.

It boots not now, when all its issue know,

Again to harrow up that tale of woe :—

^s The bloody vest—the words, so cutting cold

From those who shared not in the griefs they told :

My sons !—his brothers !—I would not recall

Those deeds, where sin and shame belong to all,

Save once again to breathe my thanks to Heaven ;—
All sinned,—all suffered,—all have been forgiven.
Thenceforth the sleepless night and sunless day
Wore in monotony of grief away ;
My broken spirit, humbled in the dust,
Mourned o'er its chastisement, but owned it just :
Earth too withheld her fruits,—my fields grew bare,
Till one vast desert frowned through all the year.
I little heeded,—for the spirit's dearth
Had left no relish for the gifts of earth ;
One only wish upon my bosom pressed,
To creep into my grave, and be at rest.
But when I saw my sons, and marked at length
The silent droop of manhood's sinewy strength ;
And childish cheeks and eyes, so bright ere while,
Part with their roses, and forget their smile,
I felt for them, and sent them forth to buy
From Egypt's granaries a brief supply.

“ Oh God of mercy ! while I deemed thy wrath
Had swept the fairest blossoms from my path,
The Angel of thy presence still was near,
Treasured each sigh, and numbered every tear ;

And he, my long lost son !—thy wing had spread
Its mighty shelter o'er his youthful head ;
Guided by Thee, he sought the massy pile,
Where Memphis frowns upon the subject Nile ;
Through various scenes thy favour cheered him on,
The bondman's fetter—and the tyrant's throne,
And gave him Pharaoh's delegated powers,
To save a people's life, his own, and ours.

¹⁰ I scarcely heard the tidings !—the slow sway
Of grief and time had sapped my strength away ;
But that fierce pang of mingled joy and wonder
Full nigh had rent the slender thread asunder :
And when I woke to sense, the chill of fear
Checked hope's bright current in its wild career ;
Dark baffling doubts did long and sternly strive
With those strange words—' Thy son is yet alive !'
Yet did I live to see him !—live to hear
Those tones of music melt upon mine ear.
The purple robe—the sceptre's jewelled weight—
The guard of honour, and the car of state,—
I marked them not :—my heart, my eye alone
One thought, one object filled,—my son—my son !

¹¹ Yea, I have seen his children !—here I rest,
Nursed by their care and by their fondness blest ;

They made the evening of my troubled day,
In cloudless sunshine, smile itself away.

“ —Aye, the broad sun is setting!—’tis the last
That on these eyes its parting light shall cast ;
He will arise to give the morrow birth,
And waken all the myriad charms of earth ;—
I shall not need him then !—my soul shall gaze
On lovelier prospects and on purer rays !
E’en now, through yonder clouds, the sapphire sky
Opes, like the portal of eternity ;
And forms of light and air around me throng,
And far, faint cadences of angel-song
Float through the depth of heaven :—I come—I
come—

Farewell, my children !—’tis my summons home—
My Father’s home !—Alas ! your cheeks are pale,
And ye have sorrowed o’er the old man’s tale ;
It ends in peace ! and, with my dying breath,
That peace, my latest blessing, I bequeath
To you and your’s for ever :—guard it well !—
¹² And he of Bethel and of Peniël—

He who, through all the varied path I trod,
Was Jacob's Comforter and Jacob's God—
He shall be yours :—and oh, ye ne'er shall know
The dark experience of my sin and woe ;
Unchanging love o'er all your life shall shine,
And crown its blessings with an end like mine !"

The scene of death is closed,—and Mamre's cave
Receives the Patriarch to his fathers' grave ;
And o'er the bier, where those dear ashes slept,
A sorrowing nation bowed its head and wept :
They built no pyramid, with mimic woe
To mock the dust it sepulchres below,—
To stand, when all beside have fled the spot,
Eternal monument of names forgot ;
Yet Jacob's humble name shall live and shine,
Scrolled 'mid the records of a hand divine ;
No tale of wonder, Fancy's ear to soothe,
But solemn lessons of unvarnished truth,
Where men of every age and every clime,
Till the great Angel knells the death of Time,
May learn, amid the fever-dream of life,
Joy's transient flash, and trouble's stormy strife,

To bid the fickle hopes of Earth depart,
And yield to God an undivided heart,
And prove his power, whatever lot befall,
To guide, to comfort, and to save through all.

NOTES.

¹ In Joseph's dream (Gen. xxxvii. 9) the patriarch Jacob is represented by the sun, and his children by the stars.

² "And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Gen. xxviii. 12. The poetical liberty taken with the literality of this passage was suggested by the view of the Alps at sunrise from the Righi. [Vide lines on the same subject among the Miscellaneous Poems.]

³ "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Gen. xxxii. 24—28.

⁴ "And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost." Gen. xxxiii. 2.

⁵ “ And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him : and they wept.” Gen. xxxiii. 4.

⁶ Gen. xxxiv.

⁷ Gen. xxxv. 9—12. God appeared to Jacob and blessed him, immediately before the death of Rachel.

⁸ “ They sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father ; and said, This have we found : know now whether it be thy son’s coat or no.” Gen. xxxvii. 32.

⁹ “ He refused to be comforted ; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.” Gen. xxxvii. 35.

¹⁰ “ They told him, saying : Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob’s heart fainted, for he believed them not.” Gen. xlv. 26.

¹¹ “ And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face : and lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed.” Gen. xlviii. 11.

¹⁹ “ The Angel that redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.” Gen. xlviii. 16.

ISHMAEL.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1835.



ISHMAEL.

Since my young days of passion—joy or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string ;
And both may jar : it may be that in vain
I would essay as I have sung to sing :
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling,
So it may wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief.

CHILDE HAROLD.

I.

AND here we part ! for thrice ten years,
'Mid all that blesses, soothes, endears,
I called this place my home :
With parents, kindred, friends at last—
With all that linked me to the past
The parting hour is come !

They'll miss my voice !—they'll see my seat

Stand empty at the board !

They'll pass along the well-known street ;—

The very house their eye shall meet ;

But none their coming steps shall greet :

It owns another lord.

Scenes of my childhood and my youth,

Friends of long tried and trusted truth,

I breathe my sad adieu !

And stranger hands my path may smooth ;

And stranger hearts my spirit sooth ;

But can they love like you ?

“ My heart and harp have lost a string ;”

And if I fondly strive to sing

A tale of kindred grief,

Ye will not harshly judge the strain,

That seeks no higher end to gain

Than, while it paints another's pain,

To yield mine own relief.

II.

Far !—far away

She hath wandered forth from her home to day

From each beloved, familiar spot,
That now henceforth shall know her not—
The meadows she trod in life's young hours,
When she bloomed the loveliest among their
flowers,—

From the fine old palms that gracefully bent
Their feathery boughs o'er the herd-king's tent,
Where a mother's watch she was wont to keep,
Singing her child to his noon-tide sleep,
From every sight and sound held dear,
By habit, to the eye and ear,
She hath gone, in the desert-paths to stray
Far!—far away!

III.

Gone! and why? 'mid a scene so lone,—
What doth she there with her stripling son?
There is not a touch of verdure nigh,
To ease the foot or to glad the eye;
The dry grey rocks look grimly down
On plains that give them back their frown;
Nothing living, that stirs or speaks,
The breathless, pulseless silence breaks:

Such languor sleeps over plain and hill,
As if the very air stood still :
And the eye looks forth, and knows no bound,
Save the sky above and the sand around :
A being formed for love and bliss,—
What doth she now in a scene like this ?

IV.

Alas for the day her master gave
His ill-starred love to the gentle slave !
Happier for her to have lived and died
His poorest herdman's humble bride,
Without a care to wring the breast,
Save such as lend to pleasure zest :
Then never had her spirit felt
The wrongs her envious mistress dealt,
Who, hopeless of a lineal heir,
Gave her the spousal rite to share,—
The happy bondmaid's fetter broke,
To load her with an heavier yoke.
That bondmaid came not of a strain¹
Which might be crushed, nor turn again :
Howe'er her feeling waked at once
In warm and eloquent response,

When kindness breathed its accents mild,
Yet Hagar was Arabia's child,
And storm-clouds, charged by Eastern sun,
Their lightning² through her veins had run.

v.

What marvel that the damsel's breast³
Some touch of natural pride confessed,
As o'er those countless herds she gazed,
And fond maternal visions raised,
How she, in other days, should call
Her child the wealthy lord of all?
But He who holds the sapphire throne
Had cast the fortunes of her son ;
And on the future's mystic page
Traced him a wider heritage.
So spake the angel,⁴ sent to cheer
Her hour of darkness and of fear,
When, as she fled her rival's wrath,
He glanced across her weary path,
And warned her home with gentle speech :
“ Hagar, return,” he cried, “ and teach
Thy soul in peace and patience still
To bend to Sarai's wayward will.

A few brief months their course must run,
And Heaven shall bless thee with a son,
A mighty prince ! but not like those
Who idly on their thrones repose ;
Of fearless heart and sinewy limb,
At war with man, and man with him,
He shall, by right of force, possess
A kingdom in the wilderness :
The purple of the gorgeous sky
Shall be his royal canopy,
And hunter's bow or warrior's brand
The insignia of his wild command !”

VI.

Such words a mother's ear received,—
A mother's ardent faith believed :
Through years of suffering meekly kept,
The promise in her heart had slept :
E'en when the harsh command was passed,
And drove her from her home at last,
Which Heaven itself forbade to share
With her oppressor's late-born heir,—
Still, in unshaken hope, she went
Upon her desolate banishment.

Yet was there one—her husband-lord
She left remembered and deplored :
Scarce might her gentle feeling brook
The anguish of his parting look,
Where meek submission ⁵ vainly strove
For mastery o'er a father's love ;
And pangs, that only parents know,
Convulsed his venerable brow ;
And free and fast the tear-drops fell,
As thus, in passionate farewell,
He clasped, and blessed his Ishmael.

VII.

“ Oh God !⁶ thou knowest I did implore thee
That Ishmael might live before thee ;
I may not murmur at the doom
Which sends him from my heart and home.
I murmured not when thy decree
Assigned such outcast lot to me,
In youth's green summer drove me forth,
Far from the country of my birth,
To wander o'er the lonely earth :
Yet, wheresoe'er my steps I bent,
Thy presence with thy servant went ;

Thine eye hath seen the altar rise ;
Thy love hath blessed the sacrifice.
And now I yield, in humble prayer,
My son,—my first-born, to thy care :
Vouchsafe to succour and to speed,
Where'er thy guiding will shall lead ;
Grant him beneath thy wings to rest,
And bless him as his sire was blest !”

VIII.

So parted they !—the stripling’s mind
Soon gave its sorrows to the wind ;
And, as the free fresh air he quaffed,
Looked in his mother’s face and laughed ;
Till from the spirits of her boy
She caught the sympathy of joy.
And, sooth to say, the child was one
A mother’s eye might doat upon :
Beautiful in his youth’s first morn,
The woes her anxious heart had borne
Touched his but slightly ; he could fly,
When the domestic storm ran high,
To find, ’mid social pleasure’s dearth,
Sunshine in heaven and bloom on earth.

IX.

“ Cheer thee, my mother ! forth we fare,
I know not, and I reckon not where !
Blest is my lot, whate’er it be,
That bids me go,—and go with thee.
Oh weep no more ! forgive thy son,
Who dared to mock⁷ the favoured one :
’Twas but the sense of thy distress,
Which edged my heart to bitterness,
A shadow o’er my path hath thrown,
That had no sorrows of its own.
I’ve watched thee oft at midnight deep,
When thou hast deemed thy child asleep,
And heard thee sigh, and felt thee weep ;
I felt the sad and scalding tear,
When thou hast laid thy cheek too near.
’Tis past ! we’ve burst that cruel chain ;
And none may bind its links again !
Look forth ! there is joy in the world before thee :
Joy sings in the breeze that wantons o’er thee ;
Joy clothes the fields in their emerald dye,
And laughs on thee from heaven’s blue eye !
While all that’s happy meets our view,
Why should not we be happy too ? ”

X.

Bright visions ! palaces of air,
Which childhood's eager fancy builds !
Scenes, that with colouring rich and rare
The sunrise of the spirit gilds !
Blossoms that, like the cistus flower,
Unfold their petals for an hour,
Yet in that tiny space compress
An age of lavish loveliness !
Poor child ! he little deemed how soon,
Beneath the withering gaze of noon,
On the dry dusty desert laid,
With nought to shelter, or to shade,
His visionary hopes would fade.

XI.

Yet long he waged unequal strife
Against the failing springs of life ;
Onward he struggled many a mile,
By speech constrained and feeble smile,
Trusting, in innocent deceit,
The eye, he durst not front, to cheat.
Ah fond delusion, tried in vain !
She caught the first slight signs of pain :

Yea, in her soul's disquietude,
Had fancied them before she viewed.

XII.

She too was weary ;⁸—all was spent,
Her little store of nourishment !
Long hours, since on her Ishmael's tongue
The last reluctant drop she wrung ;
Yet famine, weariness and thirst,
Though each and all essayed their worst,
She felt not ! every thought and care
Turned on her boy and centered there.
She marked his airy step grow weak ;
She saw the hue forsake his cheek ;
She felt his hand relax its hold ;
She kissed his brow—'twas damp and cold ;
And the rich curls of glossy brown,
Drooped in lank languid masses down.
This might not last—he reeled and fell,
“ Mother, I faint !—farewell ! farewell ! ”
'Twas all he could—the imperfect note
Was choked within his rattling throat.

XIII.

She wept not ! horror froze the tear ;
She called not ! there was none to hear.
With glance dilated, fixed and glazed,
All statue-like, she stood and gazed :
Gazed on the half-closed eyes' eclipse,
The froth upon the pallid lips,
The stiff stark limbs, that late were rife
With all the energies of life.
—Yet still he lived—for o'er his frame
At times a transient shudder came,
And short convulsive gasps for breath
Shewed nature still waged war with death.

XIV.

Oh only He,—whose word at first
Bade woman into being burst,
The master-effort of his mind,
The last and loveliest of her kind,—
He only knows the thousand ties
That weave a mother's sympathies ;
The mystery of that mighty bond,
Soft as 'tis strong, and firm as fond,

That blends joys, sorrows, hopes and fears,
To link her with the child she bears.
In vain the feebler sense of man
That feeling's breadth and depth would scan ;
It spreads beyond, it soars above
The instincts of his ruder love.
I would not with my touch profane
A theme my fancy grasps in vain :
There is no passion of sad words,—
Not music, in its wildest chords,
Can give expression to the woe,
That made lost Hagar's cup o'erflow.
Though human aid, at such an hour,
Were bootless 'gainst the spoiler's power,
'Twere something on an husband's breast
The sorrow-stricken head to rest ;
E'en on some pitying, faithful friend
The agony of tears to spend :
But there was none ! she deemed her fate
Utterly lorn and desolate :
Friend, husband, comforter was gone ;
She trusted all her hopes on one ;
And there he lay !—her dying son !

XV.

She turned aside,⁹ for brain and heart
Could act no more their desperate part ;—
She turned aside in her despair,
 And sat her down hard by :
One pang at least she could not bear—
 To see him die !
A dim, dense, dreamy stupor stole
Over the pulses of her soul,
Kind nature's last resource, when grief
Makes what it cannot find, relief.

XVI.

— — A soft sweet burst of light !
 A rush of dazzling wings !
A voice, like that which at deep midnight
 Sweeps o'er Eolian strings !
A voice, whose well remembered tone
 Heralded peace and hope and joy !
'Twas He, who erst had heard her moan !
 'Twas He of Beer-la-hai-roï !¹⁰
Now, though the world had ceased to love her,
 Yet well to Him that name was due :

His guardian eye kept watch above her ;
He lived to prove his promise true.

XVII.

“ What aileth thee ?” ¹¹ the bright one said,
“ Daughter of woe, awake !
The Lord thy footsteps hither led,
And will not here forsake.
A nation countless as the dust
Shall rise, and call him lord.
Go raise thy son, and dare to trust
Jehovah’s changeless word.
Behold !” ¹²—With gesture of command
He stamped his foot into the sand,
And, gushing at the stroke,
Pure as the pearly dewes that weep
From Hermon’s heaven-besprinkled steep
A silver runnel broke.

XVIII.

She rose :—she sprang :—but not to dip
Therein her fever-parched lip ;
She only caught its waters bright,
To bear them to her child :

In sooth it was a blessed sight,
As he raised his face and smiled !
No common fount, full well she guessed,
A virtue in its waves possessed
Such sudden strength to deal ;
But He, who called it into birth
Up from the baked and barren earth,
Had given it power to heal.

XIX.

And Ishmael grew a stalwart man,
Chief of a vast and powerful clan.
The home whence he in boyhood passed
Was his first dwelling,—and his last :
Save that no spot of charmed ground
His wayward wandering fancy bound :
The spirit took its tastes and tone
From the stern scenes he gazed upon.
Fierce as the red siroc he traced
His path through Paran's¹³ boundless waste ;
And better far for peaceful wight
To front that whirlwind in its might,
Rearing the columned sand on high,
And battling with the noontide sky,

Than quail before the ruthless sword
Of Ishmael and his robber-horde.

XX.

Many an age hath come and passed,
And many a throne to earth been cast ;
But still unchanged by changing time,
The same in habits and in clime,
Doth Ishmael's outcast race retain
The empire of their drear domain ;
No hand the desert's soil hath tamed ;
No art the desert's son reclaimed.
But dimly, through the mist of years,
The dawn of glorious day appears ;
Messiah opes His reign of bliss !
The kingdoms ¹⁴ of the world are His !
The solitary place awakes, ¹⁵

From dull and dread repose !
The desert into verdure breaks,
And blossoms as the rose !
Then Isaac's tribes shall cease to mourn,
And Ishmael's ¹⁶ outcast race return :
The rival brethren join to bring
Their homage to the heaven-sent king,

Shall bow before Messiah's throne,
Their common father's seed to own ;
Both, from their mutual bondage free,¹⁷
In piety and peace agree ;
And keep with all the blest above
The eternal jubilee of love.

NOTES.

¹ “Duart, of bold Clan-Gillian’s strain.” *Lord of the Isles*.

² “As if her veins ran lightning.” BYRON.

³ “When she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.” Gen. xvi. 4.

⁴ “The angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.....And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.” Gen. xvi. 9—12.

⁵ “And the thing was very grievous in Abraham’s sight, because of his son.” Gen. xxi. 11.

⁶ “And Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!” Gen. xvii. 18.

⁷ “And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking.” Gen. xxi. 9.

⁸ “The water was spent in the bottle.” Gen. xxi. 15.

⁹ “She went, and sat her down over against him, a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child.” Gen. xxi. 16.

¹⁰ “She called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me.....Wherefore the well was called Beer-la-

hai-roi." 'Puteum viventis et videntis.' POOLE'S *Synops.*
Gen. xvi. 13, 14.

¹¹ "What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not! for God hath heard the voice of the lad, where he is: Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thy hand, for I will make him a great nation." Gen. xxi. 17, 18; xvi. 10; xvii. 20.

¹² "God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink." Gen. xxi. 19.

¹³ "He grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer; and he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran." Gen. xxi. 20, 21.

¹⁴ "There were great voices in heaven saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." Rev. xi. 15.

¹⁵ "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." Isaiah xxxv. 1.

¹⁶ "The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba." Ps. lxxii. 10, 15.

¹⁷ "Which things are an allegory.....for this Agar, is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." Gal. iv. 24, 25.

THE
STORY OF CONSTANTINE.

A POEM WRITTEN FOR THE SEATONIAN PRIZE
IN THE YEAR 1836.

An Introduction was prefixed to this Poem when it was sent in to the Examiners, which the Editors have suppressed because it had no connexion with the subject of the Poem, and referred to events of the day of a political character.

There is reason for supposing that on this account the prize was not adjudged to it. No prize was given in this year.

THE STORY OF CONSTANTINE.

I.

THE heart of the king is in God's right hand,
As streams of a ductile rill ;
Obedient to his high command,
He guideth it whither He will.
It is ² not because Jehovah's ear
Is heavy, that it cannot hear ;
Or his arm is shortened of its power,
Or his³ name hath ceased to be a tower,
Where his saints may safely hide ;
It is not for this, that fierce and long,
Oppression, robbery, and wrong,

Make havoc of the passive throng
That in that Name confide ;
It is because the world shall see
How, in its naked majesty,
His word shall ride triumphant forth,
From east to west, from south to north,
Compelling nations to its span,
Unhindered and unhelped by man :
Therefore He lets the heathen rage,
In bootless strife, from age to age ;
And rulers of the earth unite
Their puny impotence of might,
And ply the rack, the scourge, the sword,
Against the army of the Lord.—
Ay, let them strive and fret their fill,
The Lord [†] is on his holy hill,
And smiles in calm disdain :
When they can make the sun roll back
His wheels upon their fiery track,
When they can teach the sea to bide
Their bidding, and curb in his tide,
Or, 'mid the summer's opening reign,
Thrust winter on the world again ;

Then haply may they join their force,
To check the Gospel in its course,—
Nor spend their strength in vain.

II.

But now the golden times drew nigh,
Which the sure word of prophecy
Had sketched in outline bold and strong,
And tinted with the hues of song ;—
Bright visions from afar, that stole
Upon Isaiah's tranced soul,
The light of calm and sunny days,
The jubilee of love and praise,
When monarchs ⁵ should the Church befriend,
And queens around its cradle bend,
And Faith should beam, the costliest gem,
On sceptre and on diadem.

III.

A lovely night ! the softness and the calm,
The spells of beauty, and the breath of balm,

The deep, dark, purple robe of shadowy fold,
Bedropped with jewels of celestial gold,
All these are her's ! in northern climes afar,
She yokes the whirlwinds to her sable car ;
But here, in gentlest guise, she wanders forth,
Stealing on tiptoe o'er the noiseless earth,
And breathes o'er Nature's lulled and pensive breast
Luxurious languor and delicious rest.—
Oh, man ! and can it be that aught but bliss
Awaits the morrow of a night like this ?
Alas ! the pale and pensive moonbeams play
On battle crouching in his stern array ;
And the first freshness of the morning air
Shall rouse the rampant monster from his lair.—
Hist !—you may hear the measured footsteps fall,
In their slow circuit round the armed wall ;
And, where afar the broad Campagna sweeps,
The leaguering host in grim expectance sleeps ;
'Mid the ripe orchards and the trellised vines,
The white pavilions stretch their glistening lines ;
The winds are lulled on Tiber's listless waves,
The idle banners sleep around their stav
And thousands—is it thus, on eve of strife
They slumber out the ebbing sands of life ?

Are there none here to pry with anxious glance
Into the misty future's blank expanse ?
No thought of Him, who throned in viewless state,
Marks how his creatures weave the woof of fate ;
Bids men or elements his will perform,
And sways the battle as He guides the storm ?
Yes, one at least !—yon flickering ray is sent
From the lone lamp in the Prætorian tent.
Wouldst look within ? Wouldst see the chieftain
wait

The coming crisis that decides his fate ?
A few brief hours, and Constantine is hurled
Low in the dust, or throned upon the world.
The night wanes fast ; and with the morrow's dawn
The stake is ventured, and the lot is drawn.
How fares the warrior ? There, with upturned eye,
Spending its earnest gaze on vacancy,
Pale cheek, and knitted brow, and lip compressed,
And arms close folded o'er his mailed breast,—
There, deep in thought, he sits,—his battle-blade
Ready but sheathed, across his knees is laid,
And a huge volume resting on the sword ;—
What doth it there ? 'Tis God's eternal word !

Ay, he hath scanned its records, he hath trod
In the bright footsteps of the Son of God,—
Hath watched his advent from its earliest beams,
Through the dim twilight of prophetic dreams,
Till down He sped him from the realms of day,
Wrapping the Godhead in a shroud of clay,
Lived, laboured, suffered, sunk into the tomb,
Then burst its portals and dispelled its gloom ;
Finished his race, his glorious battle won,
Reclaimed the diadem, resumed the throne ;
There waiting, till the promised day shall see
Jew, Gentile, sage and savage, bond and free,
Nations and tongues and kindreds lowly fall,
And hail Him king, and own Him all in all.

IV.

'Tis morning !—but a dismal change hath past
O'er Nature's face since we beheld it last ;
Mist on the meadows, clouds upon the hill,
And heaven and earth all colourless and chill ;
Reluctantly and slow the light creeps in,
As loth to see the game of death begin.
It matters not,—with martial clang and shout,
City and camp have poured their myriads out.

Veteran and stripling, up and away !
Heed not the scowl of the sullen day !
There lacks not light to speed ye on,
Where life may be lost, or glory won ;
To the cymbal-clash, to the trumpet-bray,
Veteran and stripling, up and away !

v.

From differing climes those warriors came ;—
There rolled Iberia's eye of flame,
Brown Asia's spare-built sons and tall
Marched with the fair-haired youth of Gaul,
And clans from Scythia's northern wild,
Took post by Lybia's swarthy child.
As vapours, drawn by summer beams
From distant oceans, lakes and streams,
At length in dreary confluence blent,
March through the darkened firmament ;
And by opposing whirlwinds driven,
With thunder-shout, and flashing levin,
Do battle on the plains of heaven :
Thus by two master-wills controlled,
Onward the mingled squadrons rolled ;

Not theirs the pure and fervent zeal,
Which patriots for their country feel ;
The lust of gold, the hope of spoil,
Had lured them from their parent soil,
To win high fame and boundless sway
For him who holds their lives in pay.

VI.

About a bow-shot's space apart,
A mutual halt was made ;
And each, with anxious eye and heart,
The hostile strength surveyed ;
And you heard no sound, save a sullen hum,
From those expectant thousands come,
And the fitful tap of the kettle-drum,
Keeping the ranks in line.
In sooth it was a goodly sight,
Those rival chiefs for battle dight ;
There towered Maxentius' giant height,
Bestriding steed as black as night ;
And there, on courser snowy white,
The form of Constantine.
Yet not the glow of warlike passion
Had reft away the calm expression,

With which in secret, yester even,
He communed with the lore of heaven :
He held a banner in his hand
 Furled closely round a spear ;
And near, awaiting his command,
Were ranged the captains of his band,
Much marvelling to see him stand,
As though some visioned scene he scanned
 In the abyss of air.

VII.

At length he spake,—“ The Son⁶ of God,
On his white war-horse forth he rode,
 With sword of lightning keen !
Chief of embattled cherubim,
The armies of heaven followed him.
 In raiment white and clean !
And none his onward path withstood ;
And he wore a vestment dipped in blood,
Inscribed with light-embroidered words,
‘ King of kings, and Lord of lords.’
Upon his vesture and his thigh,
He bore his titles blazoned high ;
 A sunbeam girt his brow ;

And, through the portals of the sky,
Marched out the royal pageantry :

I saw—I see him now.

I see him now !—before his face
The congregated clouds apace

Roll off their dim array ;
Huddling upon the rear of night,
The grizly shadows take their flight,

And yield their throne to day.—
My Lord, my God ! thine ear hath heard
The prayer my wavering faith preferred,

Thy love accepts my vow ;
The cross from yonder blue expanse
Beams brightly on my gifted glance,
Dread instrument of suffering once,—

Symbol of glory now.

Soldiers move on !—the day is ours !
E'en hell, with all its banded powers,

To God's right hand must yield.
Move on !"—And, as the word he said,
He waved the banner o'er his head,
Revealing, as its folds outspread,
The ruddy cross emblazoned

Upon an azure field.

VIII.

Then loud the signal trumpet rung ;
And forward in an instant flung,
 The glittering line of spears
Rolled on the foe the tide of death,
As lawine,⁷ loosened by a breath,
Hurls o'er the startled vale beneath
 The hoarded storms of years.
Yet all that desperate valour could,
To check the onset's furious mood,
 Maxentius dared that day :
Above the horrid din of war
His high clear voice resounded far ;
 And 'mid the foremost fray,
Where'er the heart of battle glowed,
To right and left his path he mowed ;
And the black charger he bestrode,
Tossing his awful mane abroad,
 Plunged through the thick array ;
And whilst his hoofs the assailants felled,
And whilst by tenfold odds unquelled
His demon rider smote and yelled,
 The boldest broke away.

Unhelmed the warrior fought, a spear
Had struck his casque in mid career,
And those, who caught his eye,
Read in its sternly stedfast stare
The last resolve of grim despair,—
To die.

IX.

His band was broken,—far and wide
The scene of rout was spread ;
Along the Tiber's flowery side
The ruthless sword its havoc plied,
And by the streams of carnage dyed
The peaceful river bled :
Surrounded by a veteran few,
Still to his desperate fortunes true,
The vanquished leader stood ;
He stood upon the shelving shore,
The foe came raging on before,
Behind him rolled the flood.
He waved aloft his ready brand,—
Three had been shivered in his hand,—
And now the fourth, from point to hilt,
Was reeking with the blood he spilt ;

Like bull at bay, his eye intent
Upon the advancing foe was bent,
For 'mid the vanguard of the storm
He caught his victor rival's form ;
He knew him by his banner bright,
He knew him by his charger white.
“ Now, all ye gods,” he cried, “ whose home
Was reared upon the hills of Rome !
Ye, who erst armed with triple might
Her sons to battle in your right,
Say—quail ye to the upstart faith,
Before the Jew of Nazareth ?
Lo ! now his recreant votary comes
To spoil ye of your ancient domes.
Jove ! hath thy royal bird aghast,
The lightning from its talons cast ?
Oh, hear me now !—thy champion own !—
Grant me to strike yon banner down !
Grant but with one successful blow
To wreak thy vengeance on my foe ;
And gladly, gratefully I'll die,
Blest in that single victory !”

On came the charge at headlong speed ;
The rider of the milk-white steed,

Soon as he saw Maxentius halt,
As fain to bide the last assault,
Shook tauntingly the blazoned sign,
 And spurring out before his train,
 Shouted his banner-cry amain,
“ Strike for the Cross and Constantine !”

X.

As though he shared his master's mood,
All motionless the black steed stood,
The current of his generous blood
Swelled out the net-work of each vein,
O'er his curved neck in fierce disdain
Backward he flung his bristling mane,
 And wide his nostril spread ;
Say, will he wait till front to front
The champions meet in deadly brunt ?
A moment—and their swords had crossed ;—
Just then aloft the banner tossed
With lurid and portentous light,
Like levin-brand intensely bright,
Flashed upon his blasted sight
 The cross of fiery red.

Erect he reared, with shrilly neigh ;
There!—there!—the faithless bank gives way !
The water, in its shade that lay,
 Was deep and dark as death,
And backward down the sheer descent^s
Together steed and rider went :—
 Each gazer held his breath,
Watching, along the sullen flood,
The long dark line of oozy mud
 That marked their course beneath ;
They watched in vain,—nor sight nor sound,
Broke upward from the dim profound ;
No token of the helmless head ;
No sign of the black steed ; no shred
Of cloak or housing rose to view :
The stream regained its sallow hue,
And with their old dull dreary tone,
All sign of recent tumult gone,
Its melancholy waves rolled on.—

XI.

Turn over the blood-stained page,
 And away from the battle plain ;—

We have cleared for a gentler scene the stage,
And we waken a happier strain.
With the fragrant breezes blending,
Hark to the voice of joy ascending !
They come ! they come ! make room before them !
Victory waves her pinions o'er them !
Marshalled they come in proud array,
But none shall bar their course to day ;
And the glittering spear and the glancing plume
Display war's grandeur without its gloom ;
And the trumpet notes, as they melt on the ear,
Have nothing of menace and nothing of fear ;
Before the host, like a foam-wreath white
That crests the breakers' brow of might,
A choir of virgins, four and four,
On high the sacred banner bore ;
And groups of children strewed the way
With blossoms as fresh and as fair as they.
Next these, in gorgeous car of state,
The Hero of the pageant sat,
His surcoat was wrought with the cross of red,
And the laurel his helmet garlanded ;
Four steeds by silken reins controlled,
In housings of purple fringed with gold,

Timing their pace to measured song,
Drew the triumphal pomp along ;
And far and wide as eye may ken,
Heaved its dark surges the sea of men :
The city looks out from all her towers
 To welcome the glorious show,
And as in the human torrent pours,
It seemed as though the sky rained flowers
 On those who marched below.

XII.

The foremost now their way have won
To where an altar and a throne,
Raised hastily in open air,
O'erlooked the Forum's crowded square ;
To right and left with graceful sweep
They formed in circle broad and deep :
 Down from his car of pride
 The victor chief descended,
 He laid the laurel crown aside,
 And low at the altar bended ;
And standing at his sovereign's side
 The Christian priest attended.—

Pervaded by an awful thrill
The mighty multitude stood still ;
And as the breeze in silence borne
Moves o'er the bending fields of corn,
So, by one influence swayed, the crowd
Their heads in adoration bowed.
No whisper on the stillness broke
Until the holy prelate spoke ;
Raising the golden chalice high,
With hallowed water reverently

The warrior's brow he crossed ;
“ I baptize thee,” he cried with solemn tone,
“ In the name of the Father, and of the Son,

And of the Holy Ghost !

Rise, Constantine, may future fame
Tell thou wert worthy of thy name,
Constant and true, in deed and heart,
To the God whose delegate thou art !
Guard well his church, maintain his cause,
And govern by his righteous laws :
Take from his servant's peaceful hand
This symbol of supreme command ;
And may He crown thy reign with bliss,
As thou art true to Him and His !”

He spake ;—and on the chieftain's head
The consecrated oil he shed,
And, starred with many a costly gem,
Set on the Cæsar's diadem ;

Up rose the monarch then,
And holding up his hand to Heaven,
Responded to the blessing given,
“ In the name of God, Amen !”

XIII.

Shout ;—for the spell is broken
By that last solemn word ;
The holy vow is spoken,
And the awful gift conferred ;
Myriads of tongues at once
Awakened from their trance,
The living mass rocked to and fro
With wild convulsive motion,
Like the volcano's earthquake throe
And oft-renewed explosion.—
At length the thunder rolled away,
It yielded to a gentler lay ;
The virgin group, a lovely ring,
Like a wreath of white roses blossoming,

Surround the throne of the new-made king,
 Their choral incense flinging ;
And, ever as the strain trills on,
With its mellowest notes in unison,
You may catch the small and silver tone
Of children's voices singing.

CORONATION HYMN.

STROPHE.

Zadok the priest⁹ and Nathan the seer
 Anointed Solomon king,
And the people rejoiced, and loud and clear
 Their joy through the heaven did ring.
God save the king ! long live the king !
 May the king live for ever !
Without a check, without a stain,
Long and bright be the lapse of his reign,
 Like the stream of a noble river !
Glorious and generous, blessing and blessed,
Of all his chiefs the wisest and best,
Yet offering for all he hath gained or possessed
 Glory to God the giver !

ANTISTROPHE.

And should the arm of hostile might
Assail the imperial throne,
O God, go with him to the fight,
And gird his armour on.
God save the king ! long live the king !
Let the king live for ever !
Lord, give him the sword of invincible metal ;
And cover his head in the day of battle ;
And, like a flooded river
Rushing along its desolate track,
May he drive his foes to rout and rack ;
And sing, as he brings his trophies back,
Glory to God the giver !

EPODE.

Sovereign and soldier ! here we stand,
Girdling thee round with a peaceful band ;
We have set the crown on thy victor-brows,
And we join with thine our humble vows ;
And we charge thee, by the name thou bearest,
Let the weakest thy sheltering throne be nearest,
To lift the lowly, the proud to withstand ;
Be gentle of spirit and strong of hand,

And thy subjects shall love thee, and serve thee
then,

With the faith of women and strength of men ;
And, whenever thine earthly course is run,
Mellow and warm as the setting sun,
May'st thou sink in peace to thy glorious rest,
Which, in far-off climes of the bright and blest,
For the people of God remaineth !

And at thy Sovereign's feet lay down
The jewels of a fairer crown

Than human prowess gaineth !
And join the white-robed choir that sings
Round the sapphire throne of the King of kings,
Like the¹⁰ music the deep sea shoreward flings,
Or the voice of mighty thunderings ;
The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth !

Hallelujah !

For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth !

NOTES.

¹ “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.” Prov. xxi. 1.

² Isaiah lix. 1.

³ Prov. xviii. 10.

⁴ Psalm ii. 4.

⁵ “And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.” Isaiah xlix. 23.

⁶ Rev. xix. 11—16.

⁷ Lauwine,—an avalanche.

⁸ Maxentius was drowned in attempting to cross the Tiber.

⁹ 1 Kings i. 38, 39. Vide Coronation Anthem.

¹⁰ “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” Rev. xix. 6.



ETHIOPIA

STRETCHING OUT HER HANDS UNTO GOD.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1838.

January, 1838.

“ The Examiners this year gave notice, that, should any poem appear to them to possess distinguishing merit, a premium of £100 would be adjudged instead of the ordinary prize.”

Cambridge, October, 1838.

“ The above premium was this year awarded to the REV. THOMAS EDWARDS HANKINSON, M.A., of Corpus Christi College.”

THE following poem is put into the mouth of a dying Missionary, whose life has fallen a sacrifice to his exertions for the spread of Christianity in Africa.

The truth of the circumstances supposed has been too frequently and sadly attested by experience. May the anticipations expressed be speedily approved by as certain but more cheering evidence !

This Poem was inscribed to the President and Members of the Church Missionary Society ; which contemplated amongst its first objects the amelioration of the spiritual condition of Africa ; and to this it has steadily persevered in giving its best energies, under great difficulties and discouragements.



ETHIOPIA

STRETCHING OUT HER HANDS UNTO GOD.

N^ot for the brightness of a mortal wreath,—
Not for a place midst kingly minstrels dead,—
But that perchance a faint gale of Thy breath,
A still small whisper in my song, hath led
One struggling spirit upward to Thy throne,
Or but one hope, one prayer,—for this alone

I bless thee, O my God !

THE DYING POET'S HYMN. (MRS. HEMANS.)

HATH the day broke ? I heard a gentle warning
Whisper my soul, “ Joy cometh in the morning ! ”
Lo, Heaven unbars her portals, dimly grand ;
The night is well-nigh spent ! the glorious day's at
hand !

Death !—is this death, so sweetly stealing on ?
Death the Destroyer, Sin's portentous son ?
This he, who speeds on messages of wrath
Where the blue lightning tracks his blasted path ;
The spectral rider, 'neath whose pale steed's tread
The earthquake rouses from his sulphury bed ;
Who lends the charging van his stormy shout,
Or screams vindictive o'er the maddening rout,
Or wrapped in putrid vapours dank and dense
Walks silent with the midnight pestilence ?

To me he comes with morning,—with the hour
That wakes the woodland, and that opes the flower ;
Like some celestial form he moves along,
Ushered by Beauty, heralded with song ;
The sunshine floats around him like a vest,
He wears the day-star on his radiant breast ;
And a voice warbles in the south wind's breath,
Wooring my weary soul—the voice of Death !

My wife ! my precious wife ! how well beloved,
Time, peril, pain have long and sternly proved !
It comes—the parting pang—it comes apace !
Turn not those tear-worn eyes upon my face,

Suing for leave to hope,—it may not be !
My God—*our* God hath set the spirit free :
Yet bleeds my human heart, and ill can bear
Thy passive grief, thy calm and still despair ;
For many a night, albeit thou deem'dst me sleeping,
I *felt* thy silent agony of weeping.

Come, sit thee down beside me ; let me rest
My dying head upon thy gentle breast ;
Oh, yet a little longer ! hand in hand,
Before the sunny hills of Westmoreland,
Whose forms e'en now with heavenly visions blend,
Frostwick, and Rainsborough, and Ling-mell-end,¹
'Mid those dear haunts our careless childhood trod,
We pledg'd us to each other and to God.
Since then, submissive to his high decree,
“ In perils of the desert and the sea,
In perils from the heathen,” whom we strove
To win from idols to the Lord of love,
'Mid Afric's sands, as on our native heather,
We prayed and sang, rejoiced and wept together.

Such communing must cease ; a little while
Must I forego the sweetness of thy smile :

Immortal eyes shall beam on me above,
But not the eyes that taught me first to love :
Yet let those words thy widowed woe beguile,
Those Heaven-breathed words of hope, “ A little
while.”

And, oh my Saviour, be the wish forgiven,
If I would ask one hour's delay of Heaven —
One hour forego that world of perfect bliss,
That I may cheer the lone one left in this !
And grant me speech ; for mortal words in vain
Strive with the task to win those scenes again,
Which, calmly rising o'er the fever's strife,
Entranced in bliss my final hours of life :
God's latest grace to me would I transfer,
If he permit,—my parting gift to her.

Have we not prayed, my Laura, have we not
Wove one fond wish with all our earthly lot ?
Have we not watched and studied, sought and striven,
To hail on earth the dawning reign of Heaven,
When Christ shall bid the world prepare his home,
Hallow his name, and mark his kingdom come ?

My soul goes back to those remembered hours,
When Spring was young in Kentmere's vale of flowers,

And we, with early hope and rapture rife,
Were hovering on the summer-tide of life :
How dreamed we of that Sun, whose rising sway
Shall thaw the winter of the world away,—
Shall loose life's fountain on the eternal hills
To cheer the nations with its thousand rills,—
Shall bid the thorn unwonted fruits disclose,
And the dry desert blossom as the rose !

And once, bethink thee, when the mountain shower
Drove us for refuge to our favourite bower,
Where the grey rowan, o'er the torrent bent,
Held graceful dalliance with the laughing Kent,
Didst thou not point me where the tempest fled,
Chased hard by sunshine over Mardale-head,
And, based on Ling-mell-end and Harter-fell,
A mighty rainbow strode across Nan-bell ?²

“E'en thus,” thou saidst, “though lingering doubts
are furled

O'er the bright mysteries of the further world,
Where the known present meets the things unseen,
Hope's radiant archway spans the space between.”
'Tis well to live in hope ! but yesternight
E'en her fair bow dissolved in clearer light ;

The shadows it illumed were cleft asunder,
And clear before me stretched that world of wonder.

Yet, ere I touch that bright prophetic theme,
I must find utterance for a sadder dream :
A dream !—but ah, the withering scenes it drew
Of mortal woe too present and too true !

There came a Spirit to my side, and stood
As one deep wrapt in meditative mood,
Scanning my face ; his soft, gazelle-like eye
Was fixed on mine, and sadly, silently
O'erflowed with angel-tears ; his form and face
Were cast in mould of Afric's earlier race,
Or³ like the graceful shapes that flit e'en now
O'er Amakosan plains and Stormberg's brow,
Haunting the hills that in their bosoms keep
The golden fountains of the young Gareep.⁴

“ 'Tis ever thus,” he sighed, “ 'tis Afric's doom
To find her generous friends an early tomb !
Yes, one by one, they came ;—they came, like thee,
From yon fair island of the Western sea,—
From their green homes that smile beside⁵ the Rhine,
To reap the guerdon of a death like thine !

How long, oh Lord, how long ! For many an age
I wander o'er my desolate heritage :
I waft to Thee the deep and general cry
From all its dark abodes of cruelty,—
From the foul Fetish ⁶ in the lonely wood,—
The demon-altars red with native blood,—
The human freightage, won by Christian gold,
And crushed and festering in the slave-ship's hold,—
From each and all I waft the blended groan,
And bid it plead for mercy at thy throne :
Oh, still in vain ! still Mercy's gate is barred :
There comes no voice—no answer—no regard !”

He spake, and vanished ; and I strove in vain
To rid my memory of his piteous strain :
My brain grew fevered ; sights and sounds of fear
Glared on my eye, and thrilled my startled ear ;
All was confusion,—laughter, scream, and yell,
Wild fiendish forms, the progeny of hell ;
Anon a viewless arm was round me thrown,
Which hurried me away, and set me down
In a drear forest, where a shrine was placed,
Bedecked with quaint barbarity of taste ;
And, on his throne of skulls exalted high,
Some monster of obscene idolatry.

I saw a swarthy chieftain lead his boy,
A noble stripling, full of life and joy,
And, “ kneel, my son,” he cried, “ nor lift thine eyes,
Lest thou disturb thy father’s sacrifice !”

He knelt, and thus the sire his suit preferred,
While my soul shuddered at the vows I heard :

“ I sue for vengeance : O my God, accord
Strength to my bow and sharpness to my sword !
7 Like fell hyæna may I quest my food,
Bound on the foe, and laugh, and lap his blood ;
Smite down the warrior, pierce the mother’s heart,
And drive the children to the Christian’s mart :
They shall be his,—his more accomplished skill
In torture’s arts shall work my wildest will.
Hear me, dread demon ! lo, I bring my son
To buy thine aid, my child, mine only one !
Take him, and grant revenge !”—the stripling’s eye
Just caught the uplifted axe—one short shrill cry !
And one stern crushing blow ! The rite was sped ;—
Rolled gasping in the dust the severed head ;
Whence, when I gazed again, ’twas raised, and bound
By its black locks the idol’s neck around ;
And down his breast the life-drop’s crimson rain
Freshened the hue of many a former stain.

Alas, how foul in every dark recess,
How desperate in its native wickedness
Is man's lost soul ! From Lybia's blasted earth
Full many a doleful creature draws its birth ;
But search the tiger's lair, the lion's den,
Drag forth the poisonous monsters of the fen,
Bid wood and hill and desert bring their worst,
And still, above them all, sublimely curst,
The foulest, fellest of the savage clan
Erects the brow, and wields the mind of man !

I am not raving, Laura ;—nay, dear love,
It was some missioned spirit from above
That led me through the gloom, and shewed me things
Passing e'en fever's wild imaginings ;—
Real, awful things, that solemnly reveal
The worth of human wisdom, human zeal,
When matched with human crime. We might
despair,
Were there not one resource,—the silent strength of
prayer.

Bear with me yet awhile ; nor deem it strange,
That o'er such themes I bid my memory range.

As some glad traveller, who at evening's close
Basks in bright regions of serene repose,
Recounts the forms of ruin and of wrath
That frowned incumbent on his earlier path,
Striving, by contrast with the past, to throw
O'er present bliss a livelier, mellower glow ;
E'en thus I bid those visioned horrors rise,
To lend a keener rapture to surprise,
When the changed scene shall roll its clouds away,
And greet the sunburst of millennial day.

I saw that childless warrior once again,
Brooding like vulture o'er a pile of slain :
His prayer was heard ! his red eye flashed with joy,
As though the sight repaid him for his boy ;
It seemed the haunting demon of his breast
Had drunk his fill of blood, and was at rest.
Listless he watched a mixed and motley crowd
Plying its various toil with clamour loud ;
Some stripped the ghastly dead ; some reared the
pyre,
While children danced around the roaring fire.
⁸ *That* was no funeral rite : a feast was drest !
And cannibals caroused !—Let silence veil the rest.—

The vision changed !—Beside a galley's mast
I leaned, and wooed the freshness of the blast ;
And watch'd the sunbeams, with the waves at play,
Braid their bright dance o'er Benin's purple bay ;
The shore grew dim behind, and far a-lee
Heaved the broad bosom of the boundless sea ;
Aloft the careless sailor's merry song
Cheered his brave vessel as she skimmed along :
But mine was silent joy, a dreamy feeling
Of peace, along the vacant spirit stealing.
A shock aroused me : on mine ear was thrown,
Breathed from beneath, a low and stifled moan.
' Sure 'twas delusion ! 'twas the wind that gave
A deeper murmur ! 'twas the booming wave !'
But hark, once more !—alas, too sadly plain
It tells its source,—the cry of human pain !
I⁹ sought the hatchway : all below was night,
And long I tasked in vain mine aching sight :
Up rose a noisome vapour, like the breath
That issues from the charnel jaws of Death.
At length the dimness cleared, and on my view
Slowly the den's infernal secrets grew ;
Condensed into one loathsome mass was rolled
The living cargo of that dungeon-hold !

Living?—The dead were there ! I quailed to trace
The sunken features of some stiff, still face,
Wedge'd in with living heads.—They raised no shriek,
For clamorous grief too wretched and too weak :
But, ever and anon, that feeble moan
Seemed breathed to reach the ear of God alone ;
Or with yet sadder plaint arose on high
The thin small voice of suffering infancy.

My God, how long the champion of the slave
To British ears that tale of horror gave !
How long, though Justice o'er her votary hung,
And Mercy melted on his silver tongue,
Did sordid Interest waft th' appeal aside,
And guilty Caution tremble to decide,
And sentimental statesmen sigh to hear,
Applaud the pleader, but refuse his prayer !
Yet, had those arbiters of human right
Caught but one glimpse of that appalling sight,
Might but that moan have thrilled upon the ear
Of venal senator and slumbering peer,—
One moment would have snapped the accursed chain,
Made Afric free, and Albion pure again.

Yet must it come, my Country !—O'er the deep
Of future time impervious shadows sleep ;
But now, e'en now, the dawning's early tinge
Hath edged the massy cloud with silver fringe :
Thyself hast hailed upon thy watch-tower grey
The rosy foot-prints of the coming Day ;
And taught the stormy breezes of the north
To bear glad tidings to the nations forth.
Thy voice hath travelled o'er the Atlantic wave,
Proclaiming tardy justice to the slave :
Thy children scatter wide the bread of Heaven,
And freely give what God hath freely given :
Experienced manhood and adventurous youth,
Wisdom and courage plead the cause of Truth :
Pale Greenland hears amid her waste of snow,
And sudden smiles unbend her hoary brow :
The Western world of woods, so silent long,
Claps¹⁰ its glad hands, and peals the choral song :
Eastward¹¹ old Ganga's far resounding flood
Rolls its broad billows to the praise of God ;
And more than natural beauty blooms and smiles
Where breathes the south upon Pacific isles.

And thou, sad land, must thou alone despair?
Is heaven for ever shut 'gainst Afric's prayer?
Shall Shem and Japhet glory in the Lamb,
And¹² not one blessing for the house of Ham?
Must thou alone be cursed with endless dearth,
'Mid all the greenness and the glow of earth?
Still must it prove a vain and thankless toil,
To tame the desert of thy moral soil?
Are there no drops of heaven-descending dew
For thirsty Zaharak¹³ and dun Karroo?
Must those, who came to comfort and to warn,
Flee from the ravage of some new Dingarn?¹⁴
Must lone Lukeri to the mountains dim
Mourn the lost echoes of Sicana's¹⁵ hymn;
And Christian warriors sink a helpless prey
To the pale fiend that haunts the Lion's¹⁶ Bay?

I marvel not those midnight visions drear
Made faith recoil before the shock of fear;
I marvel not, when fever racked the brain,
And death crept slowly through each curdling vein,
That watchful demons, at such evil hour,
Plied their last vantage with unwonted power.

Yet 'twas a passing conflict! comfort came
Ere faith found strength the promised aid to claim:

And sweet the moments, as I sank to rest,
Like wearied infant, on my father's breast,
And heard his voice dispel each vain alarm,
And felt beneath his everlasting arm,
And saw, while rapture turned her glance above,
The air grow radiant with his smile of love.

And, at sweet intervals, there stole along
Slow, lulling cadences of Ghona¹⁷ song :
Such as erst, mingling with the stock-dove's coo,
Sighed from the wild-wood glades of Camalû ;
Till, all unconsciously, the quiet stream
Of wakeful musings slid into a dream.

I dreamed that on some giant hill, whose brow
Wears amid tropic skies its crown of snow,
I stood : on high the heavens blazed forth unclouded,
And deep below the living world was shrouded :
For, glittering in the sun-like silver sheen,
A boundless sea of vapour slept between.
There stirred no breath along the stagnant air ;
No sound of sentient nature murmured there !
Nor he, who erst on Patmos' shore reclined,
Felt more completely severed from mankind,
Than I, as that cloud-girdled peak I trod,
Gazing on empty space,—alone with God.

Nor he of Patmos, nor the Seer, who died
In dreams of extacy on Pisgah's side,
Saw aught more strangely beautiful, than there
Rose slowly from the nether depths of air.

At first I mused in solitude : anon
I heard behind a sweet and rapturous tone :
I knew the voice—'twas his who came and wept,
As by my couch his pensive watch he kept ;
Whom, as he told of Afric's woe and crime,
I guessed¹⁸ the guardian Genius of her clime.
With lips apart, clasped hands, and lifted eyes,
He stood, conversing with the gorgeous skies :
Then forward leaned him from the beetling brow,
And scanned and searched the shadowy gulf below ;
As though his eager glance had nearly won
Such¹⁹ sights as angels bend to gaze upon.

“ It comes !” he cried ; and suddenly a sound
Of mighty whirlwinds swept the blue profound.
How grand, how awful was the wild commotion,
As the wind grappled with that cloudy ocean !
Down rushing on the silver sheeted plain,
It grasped its slumbering billows by the mane,

And dashed them, struggling in their idle wrath,
O'er cliff and peak in drifts of winnowed froth ;
And here and there some yawning fissure yields,
Far, far beyond, a glimpse of woods and fields,
And towers and palaces, like those that sleep
With²⁰ the lost isle beneath the Indian deep.

But ill may words of mine essay to trace
The rapt expression of that angel face,
When first, emerging from the shifting scene,
He caught the distant landscape's smile of green.
Tossing his arms aloft, he shrilly cast
Snatches of music on the roaring blast,
As, with Eolian touch careering strong,
It swept the strings of passion into song.

Ride on, almighty Wind !
Ride on, and leave behind
Thy dwelling in " the secret place of thunder !"
Ride on ! the shadows furled
Around the listening world
Wait but Thy touch to waft their folds asunder.

Lord of all power and might,
Let there again be light,
As when thou movedst o'er the darkling waters !
Give to the Heaven's embrace
Earth's late recovered race !
Pour out the day-stream for her sons and daughters !

Shout from the happy North
The song of freedom forth,
Like the roused music of the chainless billow !
Breathe from the rose-lipped mouth
Of the soft whispering South,
The strains of love that melt o'er childhood's pillow !

Joy ! joy ! triumphant blast !
The clouds are clearing fast,
Rolling abashed their broken ranks before thee !
Joy ! joy ! thy charms expand,
My own, my cherished land,
Girdled with grace, and diadem'd with glory !

Ceased the wild notes ! no more through Ether rings
The stern vibration of the tempest's wings :

In deep and silent worship—the intense,
Absorbing extacy of soul and sense,
We watched the change advance. High mountains
first

From the dim shroud in massy grandeur burst :
Each after each upheaved their various forms,
From crowned Atlas²¹ to the Cape²² of storms ;
And, as the sun each hoary summit kissed,
Seemed isles of light amid the waves of mist.

A few brief thrilling moments, and the whole
Flung off its veil, and rushed upon the soul,
Whose gifted eye, with one wide-circling glance,
Undimmed by distance, drank the sight at once.

Earth hath her lovely pictures ; such as shine
For him, who from the pine-clad Appenine,
Looks eager forth the thousand charms to hail,
Where Arno lingers down his haunted vale ;
Or further south, where, yet more softly sweet,
Parthenope²³ lies basking at his feet ;
White domes, dark cliffs, and gem-like islets gay,
Chased in the enamel of her azure bay :
But, oh my Laura, when the smile of Heaven,
Long, long withheld, to this dear land was given,

Methought it seemed exulting o'er the rest,
More brightly beautiful, more deeply blest ;—
The smile, that beam'd a Saviour's love to speak,
Called²⁴ Eden's blush to Lybia's swarthy cheek !
Yes ! all in vain I sought, on either hand,
The scowling wilderness of lurid sand :
On Challahengah's²⁵ breast the roses grew,
And orange blossoms wreathed thy brows, Karroo :
And yon vast nameless waste, that frowned ere-while
West of the lonely fountains of the Nile,
Where silence sat, as age on age crept by,
Guarding the central shrine of mystery,
Now glow'd with life. The final woe was past !
Returning Beauty claimed her home at last !
No livelier hues to Canaan's self were given,
When Canaan bloom'd the earthly type of Heaven,
Than now from Afric's features charmed away
The scars and sorrows of her darker day.
Belting²⁶ her mountains with umbrageous zone,
Towered up the forest pride of Lebanon ;
And Sharon's breath perfum'd her fanning gales,
And Carmel bleated in her pastoral vales ;
The smoother uplands waved with groves of spice ;
The grape hung mantling o'er the precipice ;

'Mid olive bowers delighted childhood played ;
And love was musing 'neath his myrtle shade.

The Lord had walked the land :—its withered sod
Burst forth in verdure, where his foot had trod.
He touched the rock, and gushing at the stroke,
Down its rough side the astonished waters broke :
They flung their rainbow sparkles to the light ;
And²⁷ sped them on their joyous task, to write
His praise, in living characters imprest,
On the vast tablet of the desert's breast.
And as I marked old Niger's parted stream
Like silver cross on Lybia's forehead gleam,
It seemed, methought, as though a hand divine
Had traced it there—the bright baptismal sign.
So²⁸ Fancy dreamed ; but Reason's calmer eye
Caught a far ray from ancient prophecy ;
And saw the river lead, at God's command,
The promised highway through a pathless land.
Down its broad track a thousand sails unfurled
Wafted its golden treasures to the world ;
A thousand sails, up-thronging from the main,
Poured in earth's tributary wealth again :
Along its margin of perennial green
The smiling village graced the sylvan scene ;

Or, mirrored in its depths, some goodly town
Flung the far shadows of her mural crown :
Above the rest in marble grandeur grew
The royal palaces of Timbuctû.
And oh ! than all beside more purely fair,
“ The temples of the living God ” were there !
Some, 'mid proud streets, in pillared pomp arose,
And some lay cradled in the wood's repose.
I saw the teeming city's countless crowd
Before the shrine in reverent homage bowed ;
I saw to every sweet, sequestered fane
The village pastor lead his simple train :
Their voices might not reach me ; but I felt
My soul into the general fervour melt ;
I felt the binding charm each sense enthrall,
“ One Lord, one faith, one God and Sire of all ! ”
While he, my Spirit friend, beside me kneeling,
Poured forth in speech the o'erwhelming gush of
feeling.

“ Glory to God on high !

The vast and dome-like sky

With ‘ thousand times ten thousand ’ harps is ringing :

Glory to God on earth !
The voice of sacred mirth
From all her homes responsive joy is singing.

“ Peace²⁹ on the mountain’s head
Her softening hues hath shed,
And sleeps becalm’d along the waveless ocean :
Peace o’er the meadow broods ;
And from the solemn woods
Wins the soft whisperings of their pure devotion.

“ Peace³⁰ tames each beast of prey :
Gazelle and lion stray
In sportive bands along the purple heather ;
The infant’s tiny grasp
Plays with the stingless asp,
And kine and bears repose in peace together.

“ Peace in the human breast
Hath built her downy nest,
‘ The peace of God that passeth understanding :’
Charming each passion still ;
Swaying the obedient will ;
Heightening each hope, and each delight expanding.

“ All hail, thou Prince of Peace !
O'er earth and skies and seas
The golden sceptre of thy love extending !
Hail ! to thy sapphire throne
A world, thyself hast won,
The general incense of its praise is sending !

“ When Asia sang thy name,—
And Europe's glad acclaim
Roused the far West, in kindred strains replying ;
Missed not thine ear one tone
From him, the lost, the lone,
Sad Afric's child, amid his deserts dying ?

“ It did!—³¹ Thy Spirit burned
To comfort all that mourned,
To preach glad tidings to the banished stranger,
To bid the slave be free,
The savage bow to Thee,
And bless his God, his Saviour, his Avenger.

“ Thou³² dost unveil thy face ;
The wild and lonely place
Breaks forth with joy, and strews thy path with roses ;

Awaking at thy smile
From Ocean to the Nile,
Afric to Thee her buried stores uncloses.

“ Gold, frankincense, and myrrh,—
Such are thy gifts from her,
The token offerings of her willing capture :
Her myriad voices sweet
Earth’s mighty choir complete,
The diapason of Creation’s rapture !”

My strength is failing, Laura !—one by one,
Ebb the last sands of life :—my task is done ;
And I have told thee all !—God gave me power
Surpassing Nature’s at her parting hour.
Call them not idle dreams ! on dying eyes
Oft dawns a glimpse of bright realities,
Not else revealed.—By God’s unchanging word,—
The peace and strength its promises afford,—
“ The sure and certain hope of life ” that beams
Now in my spirit’s depths,—they are not dreams !

I have not lived in vain ! albeit the spot,
Where I have dwelt and laboured, know me not ;

Though, far from the dear country of my birth,
I lay my mouldering dust in stranger earth ;
Though not one heart save thine, my gentle wife,
Keep trace or record of my lowly life ;
Yet God accepts my service ;—at his call
In cheerful faith, I gave my little all.
He sent me hither ; here I toiled to win
His word an entrance to this home of sin ;
I toiled to teach this dull and drowsy air
The sabbath melodies of praise and prayer :
And if, in after years, the seed I cast
In some lone bosom wake to life at last ;
If but one savage soul have caught from mine
The dormant principle of Life divine ;—
Oh, I should deem my labour cheaply spent !
Even in that hope I die—I die content.
My own, to God I leave thee ! trust him still !
He never failed thee—and he never will.
And part not hence ! though, beckoning o'er the main,
Thy northern mountains woo their child again,
Where olden sympathies might haply wake,
And bid thee welcome for our fathers' sake,—
Yet part not hence ! a thousand memories dear,—
Thy husband's home—thy husband's grave is here :

Thou must fulfil his work : thy gentle rule
Must still keep order in his little school :
Still thou must toil, with patient zeal, to find
The buried treasures of the Negro's mind.

And that great God, who evermore doth seek
For mightiest task the lowly and the weak,
May crown thy hopes, accepting at thy hand
The first-ripe clusters of this barren land.

He *may*—but should thy day descend in gloom,
Should nought but Faith attend thee to the tomb,
Is it not scrolled upon the leaves of fate,
God's high decree—though mystery veils the date ?
Yes ! thou and I, 'mid Heaven's ambrosial bowers,
Her “ thrones and principalities and powers,”
Shall see, from yonder empyrean height,
The march of sunshine o'er the realm of Night,
Shall hear that shout by millions pealed abroad,
“ The Morian's land *hath* stretched her hands to
God !”

NOTES.

¹ Mountains in the vale of Kentmere.

² Nanbell (Nant-bield) the mountain pass between Kentmere and Mardale.

³ The tribe of Caffres, whose territory is now divided from the Colony by the Keisi or Keiskamma, are in their own language designated the Amakosa, and their country Amakosina.

“ The Caffre youth who stood beside this female, and who looked like her younger brother, was truly a model of juvenile beauty : his figure, which was almost entirely naked, displayed graceful ease and symmetry of proportion : his high broad forehead and handsome nose and mouth approached the European standard ; and the mild yet manly expression of his full black eyes and ingenuous open brow bespoke confidence and goodwill at first sight.”—*Memoirs of Pringle*.

I was much struck with the strong resemblance that a group of Caffres bear to the Greek and Etruscan antique remains ; except that the savage drapery is more scanty, and falls in simpler folds.—ROSE’s “ *Four Years in Africa*.”

⁴ Gareep—The Orange River.

⁵ The Moravian settlement at Neuwied, and the Missionary College at Basle.

⁶ The Fetish, a sacrifice or incantation at which human victims are not unfrequently offered.

⁷ The Caffres believe that (under the influence of sorcery) men may assume the shape and habits of the wolf and the hyæna, in order to commit ravages upon those whom they dislike. This superstition resembles in some respects that of the loup-garou of the dark ages.—Vide Ps. lix. 6.

⁸ Ptolemy mentions the Æthiopes Anthropophagi. — Du FRESNOY's *Geographia*.

The tribes of Ansiko, called also Makoko, dwell to the north of the province of Congo. Their king is one of the most powerful monarchs in Africa, ruling ten kingdoms. These people are said to be cannibals; their ordinary food being the flesh either of slaves or enemies.—REES's *Cyclopædia*.

⁹ No words can describe the misery inflicted upon the slaves during the middle-passage.

In 1788 a law passed the British Legislature, by which it was provided that, in the transport of slaves, vessels under 150 tons, should not carry more than five men to every three tons, —that vessels above 150 tons should not carry more than three men to every two tons.

The Spanish Cedula of 1817 adopted the same scale.

The Carolina, captured in 1834 off Wydal, of only 75 tons burthen, had three hundred and fifty negroes crowded on board of her.

The mortality, under such circumstances, is very great. Captain Owen, in a communication with the Admiralty in 1823, says "that the ships which use this traffic consider they make an excellent voyage if they save one third of the number embarked. And," he adds, "Some vessels are *so fortunate* as to save *half* of their cargo alive."

Captain Hammond of the Spartiate, in 1834, thus writes to the British Consul at Monte Video :

“ A slave brig of 202 tons was brought into this port with five hundred and twenty-one slaves on board. This vessel is said to have cleared from Monte Video under a license to import six hundred and fifty African colonists. The license to proceed to the coast of Africa is accompanied by a curious document, purporting to be an application from two Spaniards named Villaza and Barquez for permission to import 650 colonists, and 250 *more to cover the deaths on the voyage.*”

BUXTON, *on the Slave-trade.*

¹⁰ “ The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands,”—Isa. lv. 12.

¹¹ The idea is translated from the two first stanzas of PRAED'S Greek Ode, “ *on the death of Bishop Middleton.*”

Ναμάτων πάτερ, βαθύπλουτε Γάγγα,
χαῖρε, χαῖρ' ἔμοι σὺ μὲν ἐς θάλασσαν,
ἄμερας λαχὼν ἀτέλευτον αὐγὰν,
εὐρῶσον ἱεῖς
κυμάτων κλύδωνα· βλέπων δ' ἐς εὐρὴν
ὠρανῶ μέλαθρον αἰεὶ ποτ' αὔρας
γαρύεις ἀγαλλόμενος μέγαν πο-
λύρροθον ὕμνον.

¹² “ Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, oh my father.”—Gen. xxvii. 38.

¹² “ Zaharak, or Sahara, the desert, including the desert of Bilma and that of Lybia: the Saharad is bounded on the north by Barbary; on the east by Egypt and Nubia; on the south by Nigritia and Senegambia, and on the west by the Atlantic. Between these boundaries its length from east to west is 1,100 leagues; and its mean breadth from north to south 250 leagues. Ritter calculates its superficial extent at 50,000 German square

miles. The plains of South Africa called Karroos, present a dreary listless uniformity of level surface, except where broken by a few straggling hills of schist, which rise like little volcanic cones out of a naked surface of clay, whose tinge is that of a dull ferruginous brown."—BELL's *Geography*.

¹⁴ Dingarn or Dingân (the king of Zoolu) dispersed the Missionary settlement to be formed in the neighbourhood of Port Natal.

¹⁵ Sicana, a secondary chief of the Caffres at the Kat river, was one of the converts of the missionary Williams. He composed the first Christian hymn in his native tongue. The following is a translation by Dr. Wright, who studied the language in the native hamlet of the Amakosa :

“ Oh thou great mantle which envelopes us !
 Creator of the light which is formed in the heavens ;
 Who framed and fashioned the heavens themselves ;
 Who hurled forth the ever-twinkling stars ;
 Oh ! thou mighty God of heaven,
 Who whirlest round the stars, the Pleiades !
 In thy dwelling place on thee we call,
 To be a leader and a guide to us !
 Oh Thou who to the blind givest light,
 Our great treasure, on thee we call !
 For Thou, oh Thou, art the true rock !
 Thou, oh Thou, art the true shield !
 Thou, oh Thou, art the true covert !
 On Thee, oh holy Lamb, we call,
 Whose blood for us was sprinkled forth ;
 Whose hands for us were pierced !
 Oh be Thou a leader and a guide to us,
 Creator of the light which is formed in the heavens !
 Who framed and fashioned the heavens themselves !”

¹⁶ The Lion's Bay (Sierra Leone), of which the pestilential climate has proved so fatal to the European constitution.

¹⁷ The Ghona or Ghonaqua tribe formerly inhabited the country between the Keisi and Camtoos rivers. Of those who have survived the ravages of war the greater part have become incorporated with the Gunuguebi tribe of Kaffres. Another remnant formerly resided on the Kat river under the ministry of the missionary Williams. Camalû is a glen at the source of the Kat river. Sicana's hymn sung by the Ghonas of the Kat river is set to a plaintive native air. And the language abounding in vowels is singularly adapted to such a strain.

¹⁸ Dan. x. 12, 13, 20, 21, contains a curious intimation on the subject of guardian angels presiding over the destinies of various nations.—The "Princes" of Persia, Grecia, and Judæa were evidently presiding spirits,

¹⁹ *Εἰς ἃ ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι παρακύψαι*.—1 Pet. i. 12.

²⁰ Mauri-ga-Sima, an island near Formosa, supposed to have been sunk in the sea for the crimes of its inhabitants. The vases, &c. which the fishermen and divers bring up from it are sold at an immense price in China and Japan.—KEMPFER.

²¹ "Crowned Atlas," scil. with snow. Leo Africanus derives the general name of this chain from the Arabic "Atlis, snow."—The Arabians, he says, call the Atlas, Djebel Attlis—that is, the Snowy mountain.

²² So called by Bartholomew Diaz, the first European navigator who doubled it. The name Il Cabo Tormentoso was changed by John II. of Portugal for the present name "The Cape of Good Hope."

²³ Naples.

²⁴ "He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord."—Isaiah li. 3.

²⁵ The Desert of Kalleghanny or Challahengah, north of the

Orange River, and lying between the countries of the Bechuanas and Damaras, is said to be for the most part entirely destitute of water, so that the Bechuanas and Corannas in crossing it are forced to subsist on a species of wild water melon, which grows abundantly on those arid plains.—THOMPSON'S *Travels*, Vol. II.

²⁶ “The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it; the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.”—Isaiah xxxv. 2.

²⁷ There only lacks the single gift of water to make “the desert rejoice, and blossom as the rose.” In confirmation of this fact the following beautiful passage is selected from Lichtenstein's *Voyage to the Cape*; where speaking of the great Karroo, he says, “As soon as the rains begin to fall, and penetrate the hard coat of earth, these fibres (of roots) imbibe the moisture, and pushing aside the clay, the germ of the plant, under their protection, begins to shoot. As by successive rains the soil gets more and more loosened, the plants at length appear above it, and in a few days the void waste is covered with a delicate green clothing. Not long after, thousands and thousands of flowers enamel the whole surface: the mild mid-day sun expands the radiated crowns of the mesembryanthemums and gortinia, and the young green of the plants is almost hidden by the glowing colours of their full-blown flowers, while the whole air is filled with the most fragrant odour. At this time the whole dreary desert is transformed into one continued garden of flowers; the colonist, with his herds and flocks, leaves the snowy mountains, and, descending into the plain, there finds a plentiful and wholesome supply of food for the animals, while troops of the tall ostrich, and the wandering antelope, driven also from the heights, share the repast, and enliven the scene. But how soon is the country again deprived of all its glory! It scarcely continues more than a month. As the days begin to lengthen, the revived power of the mid-day sun checks once more the lately awakened powers of vegetation.

Soon the streams begin to dry, the springs scarcely flow, till at length the complete drought compels the colonists to seek again their more elevated homes. Every day the Karroo grows more and more solitary, and by the end of September it is wholly deserted. The hardened clay bursts into a thousand cracks, which evince to the traveller the vast power of the African sun. Every trace of verdure is vanished, and the hard red soil is covered over with a brown dust, formed from the ashes of the dried and withered plants."

²⁸ The River Niger presents nearly a cruciform appearance where the Quorra that flows from the Kong mountains, as well as the Tchadda which flows from the opposite quarter, make their confluence with the main river.

The discoveries and sanguine anticipations of Messrs. Laird and Oldfield recal to mind the words of prophecy, Isa. xliii. 19. "Behold, I will do a new thing ; now it shall spring forth :... I will even make *a way in the wilderness* and rivers in the desert."

²⁹ "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice on every side."—Ps. lxxv. 11, 12.

³⁰ "And the cow and the bear shall feed ; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."—Isa. xi. 7—9.

³¹ "He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted ; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound..... to comfort all that mourn."—Isa. lxi. 1, 2.

³² "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them ; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."—Isa. xxxv. 1.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1840.



THE THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

PART I.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS AS IT WAS.

“ When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of
God shouted for joy.”

JOB xxxviii. 7.

I.

It was but a whisper of heavenly grace ;
Yet fast it sped and far :
Down from the high and holy place,
And away to the outermost realms of space,
It travelled from star to star.

There be **FOUR** ¹ standing by the throne,
 Nearest of living things ;
Within the rim of the ² rainbow zone,
They catch its emerald tints upon
 The snow of their folded wings ;
And bowed was every glorious head,
As silently they worshipped ;
But, oh ! that silent worship said
 Unutterable things. ³
For from the wall of dazzling light,
Impervious e'en to angel-sight,
That circles round the place of doom,
Jehovah's secret council-room,
Where sit the co-eternal **THREE**
In conclave upon things to be,—
A whisper of some mighty plan
Passed outward, ⁴—“ Let us fashion man
In our own image : let him bear
Our likeness, and its glory share ;
And wield o'er earth, his fair abode,
The delegated power of God.”
Then followed intimations dim,
Whereof the four-fold Cherubim

Divined but little, save a strange
Accent of melancholy change,
Words that for angel's tongue unmeet
They might not venture to repeat :
But far away through ether ran
The rumour, " Let us fashion man."'
In widening circles of sweet sound,
It swept heaven's infinite profound :
Like a summer wave, whose motion
Heaves, but doth not break, the ocean ;
Whispering, with the gentlest kiss,
As it passed each isle of bliss,
To the happy shore of these
Heaven-engirdled Cyclades.

11.

A ⁵ veil of silver vapour lies
 Upon the new-created earth,
As if to hide from curious eyes
 The secrets of some mystic birth :
Upon the pale and tranquil sky
The hills stand gazing stedfastly ;
While, buried in the filmy wreath,
The silent woodland glooms beneath.

It is the hush of expectation
That stops the pulses of creation ;
Not a breath, not a motion in earth or air ;
For the Spirit of God is brooding there.
But lo ! the mountain-peaks give warning
They have seen the face of morning ;
Tinting first the cones of ice,
Then, by crag and precipice,
Downward streams the flood of splendour,
With its hues so warm and tender :
Now, like smoke, the mists arise,
Breathed from some great sacrifice,
Wafting up from Eden's bowers
The thanksgivings of her flowers :
From the depth of quiet valleys,
Gardened plains and leafy alleys,
With its quire of happy voices,
Nature wakens, and rejoices ;
Earth aside her mantle throws,
And in primal beauty glows.
With toilsome steps, through paths of danger,
I have wooed the rover's wild delight ;
Hunting for scenes of beauty and grandeur,
And spell-bound, as they rose to sight :

But never,—not e'en in childhood's time,
When the common face of earth and sky
Caught from the spirit's glowing prime,
A charm beyond reality,—
Never did sinful man behold
Such scene as blest angelic eyes,
When morn the mists asunder roll'd,
And light broke in on Paradise.

III.

Yet from the soulless face of nature,
Those heavenly watchers turned, to scan,
In one supremely beauteous creature,
God's last-created marvel, Man.
As just awakened from a trance,
He stood amid earth's tribes alone,
And on his brow's serene expanse
The seal of sovereign Godhead shone :
Amazement, chastened by control
Of conscious power, his features flushed,
As, through the eye, upon the soul
At once the world of vision rushed.
The genial landscape basked before him ;
The glorious sunshine blazed above ;

It seemed the firmament bent o'er him,
To clasp him and his realm in love.
At length, as from the shock of wonder
His spirit had regained its tone,
He sought, with closer gaze, to ponder
On beauty's features, one by one.
He felt the texture of the grass ;
Inhaled the fragrance of the blossom ;
And watched the light and shadows pass
O'er the green upland's swelling bosom ;
He touched the dew-drop, as it hung,
And started, as it burst from sight,
Half fearful of inflicted wrong
Upon the tiny globe of light.
Then, while with wistful eye he gazed
At families of living things,
That through the verdant meadows grazed,
Or fanned the fragrant air with wings,
And, in the stream's clear crystal, saw
The glittering fish together swim,
He marvelled much that nature's law
Had given no kindred friend to him :
A shadowy likeness walked beside him,
Along his path in silence stealing ;

But still the impassive form denied him
All token of congenial feeling.

IV.

Thus musing on, he gained a nook
Deep in the garden's inmost bowers,
Through which a little lulling brook
Kept prattling to the grass and flowers ;
And cool and green the light came in,
Winnowed through countless leaves above,
From which the breeze could rarely win
A whisper, to reward its love :
Bland invitation to repose !
Sweet languor o'er his senses crept ;
He felt the shadows round him close,
And in the lap of peace he slept ;
He ⁶ slept, and dreamed,—a blessed dream ;
Blue vernal eyes and sunny hair !
A form that like his own did seem,
But far more purely fair !
It called on him,—a silver sound,
Trustful and tender, thrilled his ear ;—
It called ;—he started from the ground,—
Awoke,—and found it there !

“ Woman ! ” it was the first sweet word,
That ever from his lips had parted ;
No ear, till then, his voice had heard,
He felt so lonely-hearted.
Meekly her master’s gaze she met,
And to her cheeks the colour came ;
Blushes of beauty,—for, as yet,
They knew no blush of shame.
Oh, language hath no skill to tell
The thoughts that in their bosoms strove,
As ’tranced by one absorbing spell,
They felt the new-born might of love :
Not the idolatry of sense,
That holds in carnal hearts abode ;
But pure, serene, sublime, intense,
It rapt their wedded souls to God.
Instinctively they sought the light ;
As though beneath heaven’s open eye
They deemed it fitting to unite
Their homage to their Sire on high.
He, with his glorious brow upraised,
Adored the author of his bliss ;
As conscious that the God he praised
Gave back responsive smiles to his.

She, with her graceful head depressed,
And arm across his shoulders thrown ;
While, like a veil, o'er face and breast
Drooped the rich, radiant tresses down.

v.

A moment o'er that blissful sight
Hosts of admiring angels hung ;
The passion of a new delight
Struck voiceless each immortal tongue :
Then sudden, o'er the blue expanse,
Millions of sparkles seemed to glance ;
And, loosed on every side at once,
With multitudinous response
All heaven burst forth in song.
“ Hail ! hail ! hail !
Welcome to your realm of beauty !
Welcome to your blest abode !
Thus, with mingled love and duty,
We, the elder sons of God,
Join our voices to salute ye,
Pour our echoing strains abroad :

Now let triumph ride the gale ;
Peace and joy and praise prevail !
It is finished ! hail ! all-hail !

VI.

“ Finished is the six-days’ wonder !
Since Jehovah’s voice of might,
From the secret place of thunder,
Spake the word, and there was light,—
We have watched the glad returning
Of the day-star to the earth,
From the chamber of the morning
Marching⁷ like a bridegroom forth ;
We have watched the grand procession
Of the changes, as they passed,
Through each beautiful succession :
—Ye the loveliest ! ye the last !
’Tis the sabbath of creation !
God upon his throne doth rest ;
And his smile of approbation
All his perfect work hath blest.

Of the mighty lyre of nature
Harmonized is every chord ;
And the least and loftiest creature
Breathes thanksgiving to the Lord.
Ye, in whom the beauty liveth,
We have longed and watched to view,
Praise with us the God who giveth
You to us, and us to you :
For ye,—for ye who have a soul like ours ;
It heaves in your bosom, it beams thro' your eye,
Baptized in the feelings, endowed with the powers
That burn through the depth of eternity.
And happy are we, unto whom 'tis given
To tend you as guardians, and cheer you as friends :
Happy to speed from our homes in heaven,
And carry the blessings your Father sends.

VII.

“ We will encamp around by night,
Your holy rest to keep ;
Like the hills that watch, in shadowy might,
Round the lake so pure and deep,
Which, dreaming of distant worlds of light,
Lies locked in their arms asleep.

And, as that still lake awakes and rejoices,
When Zephyr his playmates hath found,
That dance to shore with their liquid voices
Telling their joy around ;—
So ye shall awake, at our gentle call,
From your pillow of fern and heather ;
And we'll sing to the God and the Father of all
Our matin praise together.
When past the freshness of the dawning,
And spent the spirits of the breeze ;
When fiery noon comes down, embrowning
The slippery turf beneath the trees,
Our wings shall interweave an awning
Of cooler shade than these.
And when the sapphire gates of even
Open to realms beyond ;
When earth to the embrace of heaven
Doth glowingly respond ;
When sweet and slumbrous melodies
O'er land and water creep,
As Nature sits, with half-shut eyes,
Singing herself to sleep ;—
Ye shall catch the gleam of our golden hair
In the wake of the sinking sun :

And we'll wander on earth, or hover in air,
With our robes of glory on.
And those, whose mission with day-light closes,
As homeward they hie them fast,
Shall leave you a chaplet of heaven's own roses
On the mountain they touched the last.

VIII.

“ Yet not to the animal taste alone
Is our office of love confined ;
We will minister pleasures of loftier tone
To the subtler sense of mind,
In the beauty that woos the eye around,
In the music that haunts the ear,
Ye shall feel a pleasure more profound
Than aught ye see and hear.
A voice from the ocean's world of wonder,
From the mountain's crest elate,—
From the rushing wind, from the rolling thunder,
Announces ‘ GOD IS GREAT.’
Where, in the forest's lonely place,
The fountain dwells secure,
With smiles upon its dimpled face,
It tells you ‘ GOD IS PURE.’

The humblest flower, the tiniest creature
That creeps, or swims, or flies,
Joins with the mightier forms of nature
To attest that 'GOD IS WISE.'
The blessing with the sunshine given
Wakes joy in field and grove ;
Heaven speaks to earth, and earth to heaven
Makes answer 'GOD IS LOVE !'
Thus, borrowing from material things
A token and a tone,
We'll teach of love, whose secret springs
God sees,—and God alone.

IX.

“ And would ye know what deeds are done
In other worlds afar,
And call down teachers many a one
From planet and from star ;
Delightful task, to single out
Some twinkling point of light
From all the diamonds wreathed about
The coronal of night ;
And draw you of its scenery
A landscape grand and strange ;

And trace through all its history
The wondrous path of change !

X.

“ Yet there be vast and dim dominions,—
Ocean without a shore,—
Which not the boldest angel-pinions
Have ventured to explore :
And there be mysteries fathomless,
Wrought in a realm of fire,
Whereat the Cherubim may guess,
But have not dared enquire.
One thing we know, that, ages back,
Before your earth was made,
There rose a cloud, so densely black,
It cast e'en heaven in shade :
That darkness passed, and light on high
Again serenely shone ;
But, when we looked along the sky,
Ten thousand stars were gone !
Again the angel-watch was set
The eternal gates before,
But many a face, we there had met,
We met again no more !

God³ o'er their fate a veil hath spread,
Nor further may we win,
Save of its cause a rumour dread,
That sighed the name of *sin*.
God guard us safe from aught of ill
In knowledge or in deed !
To know his love, to do his will,—
We ask no higher meed.
May nought avert the blessing given
His creatures at their birth ;
Disturb the harmonies of heaven,
Or mar the peace of earth !”

PART II.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS AS IT IS.

Thus after man had fallen (if aught
These perishable spheres have wrought
May with such issue be compared)
Throngs of celestial visages,
Darkening, like water in the breeze,
An holy sadness shared.

WORDSWORTH.

“ *The Eclipse of the Sun*, 1820.”

I.

AND must the minstrel change his theme.
And waken memory from a dream
Of bliss so passing sweet ;
And seal the ear, and close the eye
To songs and scenes of days gone by,
The stern and sad reality
Of present life to greet ?

Alas it ill beseemeth one,
Whose primal innocence is gone,
To speak of nature or of man,
Before the curse its reign began !
How can I frame my lay aright,
To tell of majesty and might,
Glory and beauty and delight ?
I never gazed on Eden's mountains,
Nor drank of her life-giving fountains ;
Nor heard her music soft or strong,
As happiness flowed forth in song :
Beauty or joy unmarred by guilt
I never saw,—I never felt.
The very flowers, that meet my eye,
Just look me in the face and die :
And I have watched, with aching bosom,
The withering of a dearer blossom,
And could not turn the stroke away,
Nor bribe the spoiler for delay ;
Yea, when I looked to Heaven in prayer,
I saw the doom was written there :
And I have seen the mental spark
Go out, and leave its chamber dark.

Each living creature, that hath breath,
Groaneth with pain and travaileth ;
And every day, and all day long,
The voice of suffering and of wrong
Cries from without, or whispers from within,
“ Sin came into the world, and death by sin !”

II.

Forgive, forgive me, oh my God, if aught
Savour of bitterness in word or thought !
But oh ! to think of all that glory past,—
Life's morning hour so bright,—so soon o'ercast ;—
To think for what fond man, seduced to crime,
Forswore the promise of his golden prime,—
Of all that fatal act of rashness cost,—
The beauty blighted, and the birthright lost,
And mingled stains of human blood and tears,
Fouling the current of six thousand years :—
And most, whene'er I gaze at childhood's face,
Eager to start on life's eventful race,
And think how soon those prattlers must begin
To taste their heir-loom of primeval sin,
And track the path not yet to softness worn,
And bear the burthen which their sires have borne,

And drop at last from off the busy stage,
Shrivelled and grey, but more with care than age ;—
This makes the passion of my grief grow strong ;
And, God forgive me, if my words be wrong !—

For though his Cherubim, with fiery sword,
Deny man entrance, where he once was lord ;
Though lost to innocence and honour both,
“ To trouble born,” and “ crushed before the moth,”
Fain would I learn to act my altered part,
In uncomplaining brokenness of heart ;
I lay my guilty forehead in the dust,
And own, albeit he slay me, God is just.
Yea, God is merciful ! He hath not hurled
Back into chaos a polluted world :
On man, how fallen and how frail soe’er,
He bends no frown of majesty severe ;
But grants him strength with present ills to cope,
And cheers him homeward with the voice of hope.
Thus while I smart beneath the chastening rod,
I bless the smiter :—He is still *my God* !

III.

Ye too, bright Spirits, who, when time began,
In choral concert hymned the birth of man !

Say, cast ye not from your unfaded bowers
A look of pity on the wreck of ours ?
Doth ancient friendship plead her rights in vain ?
God hath remitted ! say, can ye retain ?
Ah no ! when first the fatal news was told,
Astonished seraphs dropped their harps of gold ;
Faltered the music on celestial lips,
And starry eyes were veiled in sad eclipse ;
Dreading the outbreak of avenging power,
All⁹ Heaven was mute, “ the space of half an hour.”
It came ! but not upon the lightning’s flash ;
Not in the rending earthquake’s hideous crash ;
Not with the rush of whirlwinds ;—oh, rejoice !
There *must* be mercy in that “ still small voice !”
A few brief words reversed the deadly ban,
“ God¹⁰ will be just, and yet keep peace with man.”
Few words they were and brief,—but never sound
So thrilled the immortal listeners, thronged around :
For awful meanings dimly were revealed,
And ancient mystery her scroll unsealed ;
And, like the shadowy pageant of a dream,
Came forth the features of some wondrous scheme ;
And a low groan-like utterance, from beneath,
In strange connexion spake of God and Death.

Long ages rolled away, while angels bent
Down from their spheres, to watch the grand event :
In cloudy type and mythic prophecy,
They marked the dawning streak the eastern sky ;
And, as the Spirit spake by sage or seer,
Seraphic minstrels hushed their harps to hear.
And, oh ! 'twere vain to guess what angels felt,
When by the godlike infant's couch they knelt ;—
Saw the Creator roam the world he made,
By foes insulted and by friends betrayed ;—
Blotted the daylight from the noon-tide sky,
And dared not see the Lord of glory die :
Then hailed the conqueror of the rifled tomb,
And swelled his triumph as they bore him home.
Of such I sing not,—reverencing from far
The theme, a Milton did but touch to mar.

IV.

Enough to simple bard is given,
Who knows that all the host of heaven,
Her Cherubim and Seraphim,
Are messengers of love to him ;
That those, who ministered relief
To yon mysterious Man of grief,

Frequent¹¹ and hallow the abode,
Where dwells the lowliest child of God.
Enough for one, who strays along,
Shunning the tumult and the throng,
From scenes with tender interest rife,
That haunt the private lanes of life,
From what an inward sense reveals,
From all he fancies, or he feels,
To glean, with heedful heart and eyes,
Hints of angelic sympathies.
Oh yes ! methinks, we little know
What to such sympathies we owe ;
Through what a scale of truth sublime
They help the darkling mind to climb.
Did Newton, with unaided sight,
Walk through the starry realms of light ?—
Franklin, by prowess all his own,
Summon the obedient lightning down ?
Did Bacon teach himself to scan
The volume of the mind of man ?—
Did all the wisdom of the wise
Detect the subtle strength, that lies
In nature's secret alchymies ?—
Nay ! let the sophist, proudly blind,

Prate of the attributes of mind,
And vaunt to each his proper claim,
Heedless of whence or how they came ;
A sense of impotence and need
Finds comfort in an humbler creed ;
And holds, as heaven-revealed truth,
That, from the earliest dawn of youth,
Through every stage, that lies between
The opening and the closing scene,
Some¹² blessed spirit, at our side,
Doth strengthen, solace, guard, and guide :
The eye beholds it not, the ear
Reports not of its presence here ;
Yet well the soul her friend describes,
And, all unhelped by ear or eyes,
Addresses, listens, and replies.

v.

I bent me o'er my infant child,
And marked that, in her sleep, she smiled :
I could not tell from what bright thought
Her cheek that ray of gladness caught ;
Yet doubted not her angel's voice
Had bid my little one rejoice :

And when, with all a parent's fears,
I pore into the gulf of years,
'Tis sweet to think of Him whose hand
 Caressed the infant race,
What time, with voice divinely bland,
 He spake those words of grace,
"The children's¹³ angels always stand
 Before my Father's face."
Smile on, my babe ; nor heed, the while,
That tears are gushing at thy smile ;
Thou knowest not how that look hath cast
Our spirits backward on the past ;
That gleam of innocence and mirth
Recalled a face not now on earth,—
Thy sister's face ! and memory tells
 She once was beautiful as thou ;
But she is where her Saviour dwells,
 A ministering angel now.
'Twas on a lovely sabbath-day
 Her farewell look to us she gave ;
And then she took that smile away,—
 She took it to her grave.
Thy waking eye will see her not ;
 But, when I marked those sunny gleams

Play on thy dimpled cheek, methought,
Thou sawest her in thy dreams.
Oh ! great had been her love to thee,
Had such been Heaven's benignant will,
And who shall say but she may be
Thy guardian Angel still ?

VI.

Frail is the barrier that divides
The yearning spirit from its kind ;
And thin the veil that barely hides
The circumambient world of mind.
Oh ! say not that the dead are lost
To those, who still their memory keep,
Commingle with a stranger host,
Or spell-bound in unconscious sleep !
Deem rather, when around the evening hearth
A warmer sense of social bliss is shed,
That angels share and sanctify our mirth,
And recognise the presence of the dead.
And when, in social or domestic prayer,
The household group their hearts and voices
raise,

Believe that viewless worshippers are there,
Fanning the genial flame of prayer and praise.
The Church believes ;¹⁴ with filial love she calls
Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs to her side ;
For well she knows they love the sacred walls,
In which they laboured, and for which they died.
Joy to the angels !—joy o'er all to these,
Who erst in human forms the Temple trod,
When, softened by the Gospel's words of peace,
A sinner weeps,—a soul is born to God !

VII.

It is the still grey hour of prime,
Ere nature's universal chime,
Uplifted on the breath of morn,
Announces that the day is born.
There is no hour of midnight deep
More sacred to untroubled sleep :
Yet e'en that slumber-breathing hour
Exerts in vain its soothing power
O'er the worn eyes and features wan
Of those, who tend yon dying man,—
Two gentle girls ;—and, many a night,
Upheld by love's untiring might,

Beside a suffering parent's bed,
They have an angel's mission sped.
A mother's loss, in early years,
They wept with childhood's transient tears ;
Those tears a father's hand had dried,
That loss a father's heart supplied.
Alas, to think, when he is gone,
They're left amid the world alone !
Hope struggled long ; till yester-even,
Her solace and her aid was given ;
But then, as the physician pressed,
With anxious touch the shrunken wrist,
The truth he dared no longer hide,—
He sadly shook his head and sighed.
They murmured not ; but tears were shed,
In silence, as they meekly spread,
For the last rite, the wine and bread :
And never is that rite more dear,—
Never brings earth to heaven more near,
Than when the dying saint, by faith,
Thus clasps the conqueror of death,—
Yea ¹⁵ clasps, in one benign embrace,
The total family of grace,—

Those whom he leaves in grief behind,—
Those whom he trusts in bliss to find.
So felt the father ; o'er his soul
The dawn of coming glory stole :
Anon, with peaceful smile, he bade
His daughters lend their tuneful aid ;
His lips were mute, but sang his heart
 Old Simeon's strain of exultation,
“ Lord, let thy servant now depart,
 For I have seen thy great salvation !”
Then, as the notes flowed on, he fell
 Into an almost breathless sleep :
The sisters knew the token well,
But, touched by the same soothing spell,
 They each forbore to weep :
They felt—nor did the feeling bear
To their young hearts a thought of fear,—
That, shrouded by the midnight gloom,
Death watched beside them in the room :
A solemn utterance they heard,
 Borne in upon the soul,
“ I ¹⁶ come, to loose the silver cord,
 And break the golden bowl !”

VIII.

The dawn had scarcely streaked the skies,
When, lo, their sire unclosed his eyes ;
And, half upspringing from the bed,
 He caught at something hovering near ;
“ Stay ! stay awhile ! ” he wildly said,
 “ Thou must not leave me here !
My wife ! my sainted one ! O God,
Since she was laid beneath the sod,
In many a vision of the night,
Her form hath glanced upon my sight ;
But, ever as I gazed thereon,
Methought the features dimly shone ;
And back unto my heart did bring
Her look of patient suffering :
The portrait, sorrowing memory drew,
Was tinted with her own sad hue.
Not thus,—not thus, I saw her now !
Gladness endiademed her brow ;
And, on her cheek, and in her eye,
The youth of immortality :
No haunting phantom of the past ;
Herself,—her living self, at last !

With all the glory and the grace,
She brought her own familiar face.

—And, lo again ! to you ! to you !

My children, are her arms extended ;
Oh ! still to earth's affections true,

The mother with the saint is blended.
Thrice happy thought ! parental love
Sits on the loftiest throne above ;
And soothes, with tenderest caress,
The friendless and the fatherless !
Farewell ! my seraph waves her hand !
O Death ! O Life ! how fair ! how grand !
A film is passing from my sight ;
The chamber glows with dazzling light ;
The morning clouds, in masses rolled,
Are changing into towers of gold :
I see the place where angels dwell !
I see the eternal Citadel !
A path, like sunbeam bright and straight,
Leads up to yonder massy gate :
It opes : the sky is thronged with wings !
And harp-notes from ten thousand strings
Discourse of " . . . Death cut short the word ;
The speechless lips a moment stirred :

Back fell the head, like lifeless stone ;
They raised it,—but their sire was gone.

IX.

Rejoice, sweet orphans, though to you
The world have lost its gaudy hue ;
And youth's wild hopes and dizzy mirth
Can never be your lot on earth ;
A calmer, purer light is shed
Along the lonely path ye tread ;—
Lonely—for with averted eye,
The careless crowd may pass you by,—
Yet not deserted : many a friend
Invisibly your steps shall tend ;
The kindred dead shall hover near,
And whisper in the spirit's ear ;
And ease the load, and still the strife,
And smooth the ruggedness of life.
To you the desert shall disclose
The fountain that in secret flows ;
Valley and hill shall wear for you
A livelier green, a deeper blue ;
And ever, as with feeble pace,
Ye slacken in the Christian's race,

Down hastening on unwearied wing,
Those heavenly ministers shall bring
A taste and token of the bliss,
That reigns in yonder world, to this.

X.

Enough ! with no unthankful heart,
From this congenial theme I part :
Full welcome was its gentle power
O'er contemplation's pensive hour ;
Albeit the strain be little worth,
That gushes at its bidding forth ;
For slight the aid, that speech supplies,
To unlock the spirit's mysteries :
There's many a thought brooks no revealing ;
And symphonies of high-toned feeling
Make music with the lone heart's chords,
Which never can be breathed in words.

To some,—should such their ear incline
A moment to a lay like mine,—
Its dimly-shadowed truths may seem
The phantoms of a brainsick dream :
E'en let them track their narrow sphere,
And bound their every wish and care

With what they see and what they hear ;
I leave them to their sordid pelf,
And sing my visions to myself.
Rather than grovel in the dust,
Held down by chains of earthly lust,
I'd seek, in cavern or in wood,
An angel-haunted solitude :
And, if the bustling world refuse
Its homage to the heaven-taught muse,
Enough for me, in silence deep,
The treasures of the soul to keep,—
Thoughts, that assist her steps to climb
Up to eternity from time :
Enough, in secret to invite
Communion with the sons of light,
Like ¹⁷ that mysterious font on Gavel's cone,
Fed with the dews of heaven, and seen by heaven
alone.

NOTES.

¹ “ Ezek i. 5, and Rev. iv. 6.

² “ There was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.”—Rev. iv. 3.

³ “ The silence of their rapture spake
Unutterable things.”

“ *A Dream of Cloud-land*,” by MRS.——

⁴ “ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion, &c.”—Gen. i. 26.

⁵ “ The Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth; ... but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.”—Gen. ii. 5, 6.

⁶ “ And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, &c. . . .”—Gen. ii. 21.

⁷ “ Which is as a bridegroom, coming out of his chamber...” —Ps. xix. 5.

⁸ This varies from the tradition espoused, or invented by Milton. Our Lord says, (Luke x. 18,) “ I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,” which rather favours the idea that the spectacle was limited to *divine* witnesses.

⁹ “ And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about the space of half an hour.”—Rev. viii. 1. The author has taken the liberty to appropriate this expressive description of angelic attention not unmingled with apprehension.

¹⁰ Isai. xlv. 21. Rom. iii. 26.

¹¹ “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”—Ps. xxxiv. 7.

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”—Heb. i. 14.

¹² “He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways.”—Ps. xci. 11.

¹³ “I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”—Matt. xviii. 10.

¹⁴ Particularly in the two hymns “Te Deum laudamus,” and “Benedicite omnia opera Domini.”

¹⁵ “Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of Heaven, &c.” Sacramental Anthem (τρισάγιος).

¹⁶ “Eccles. xii. 6.

¹⁷ On the highest point (of Great Gavel) is a small triangular receptacle in the native rock, which, the shepherds say, is never dry. There we might have slaked our thirst plenteously with a pure and celestial liquid; for the cup or basin, it appears, has no other feeder than the dews of heaven, the showers, the vapours, the hoar-frost, and the spotless snow.—WORDSWORTH'S *Guide to the Lakes*.

THE
CALL OF ABRAHAM.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1841.

Ibimus ! Ibimus !
Quocunque precedas
Carpere iter, comites, parati.

HOR.

TO ONE

WHO, FROM CHILDHOOD TO MATURITY,

IN SORROW AND IN JOY,

HATH SHARED WITH HIM THE SYMPATHIES OF

NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL KINDRED,

THE AUTHOR

INSCRIBES

The Following Poem

AS A HUMBLE BUT FAITHFUL MEMORIAL OF

A BROTHER'S LOVE.

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

A LONG, long time ago,—

Time measured, not upon the scale of years,
But by those grave events which mark its flow
Down its deep channel in the vale of tears :
(For, like the mountain brook whose early springing
Gives promise of a swift and joyous course,
O'er moss and crag its noisy waters flinging,
And traversing long tracts with headlong force,
Life, in its first outgoings, speeds amain
Adown the steeps of childhood and of youth,
Then, like the stream when it hath reached the plain,
Works slowly forward, silent, deep, and smooth,
Reflecting much, and, with abated powers,
Travelling in days what once it sped in hours.)

E'en thus it seems a long, long time ago,
Since first, by secret undefined revealings,
Our hearts, beloved sister, learned to know
Each other's thoughts, and share each other's
feelings.

'Tis sung that Memnon's harp awoke,
Not to a mortal stroke,
But by the day's bright king
Solicited to sing,
Touched ¹ with the finger of his rising ray ;—
And so, in life's young day,
The dawning of that sunny soul of thine
Called forth the music that was hid in mine.

And then, perchance, as girl and boy,
Our intercourse was all of joy ;—
Sweet converse, as we sat together,
Rejoicing in the radiant weather
That beamed upon us both,
And feeling we had pledged to each,
Without the help of sign or speech,
An everlasting troth.
Yea everlasting !—time hath sped,
And sunny skies have vanished,

And scenes are changed, and friends are dead,
Hopes wither, joys depart ;
Yet still the olden spell works on,
And still, in holiest unison,
With sadder, yet with sweeter tone
Makes answer heart to heart.

Hast thou not felt the tremor thrown
By one low-breathed mysterious sound
Into the minster's nerves of stone,
Which, touched with sympathy profound,
Made answer to that note alone
From all its conscious depths around ?
And knowest thou not one gentle word
Thrilling the spirit's shrine within,
When not an answering pulse had stirred
To the loud world's tumultuous din ?
HOME ! how doth memory from her trance
Bound at that single utterance !
What echoes from their silence break !
What buried feelings start awake !
What thickly thronging fancies come !
—The key-note of the soul is “ HOME.”

Time was, when youthful thought would range,
Most pleased, where most was wild and strange ;
I loved to trace with eager eyes,
In man's primeval histories,
Those sparks of light, which, faint and far,
Just served for fancy's guiding star,
Piercing the shadowy curtains furled
Around the cradle of the world.
'Twas sweet to dream of nature's prime,
Basking amid her native clime :
And, ever and anon, my path
Was crossed by some gaunt form of wrath,
Whose awful eye and brow severe
Called up the livelier zest of fear :
Yet in one imaged scene my mind
Meaning or moral failed to find ;
Only a vague, foreboding sense
Of some mysterious providence
Hinted a truth it might not show :
— I learned it since,—I feel it now !

Methought it was the hour of rest,
When nature's face looks loveliest,

And earth below and heaven above
Seemed touched with tender hues of love ;
Beneath the dear paternal tree
There met a goodly family ;—
The sire, upon whose lofty brow
A century had left its snow,
Albeit the harrowing touch of care
Had marked no trace of ravage there,
It well became, so calm and sage,
The venerable crown of age :
Two sons, the old man's joy and pride,
With one fair grandson, graced his side,
An ² orphan, in whose youthful face
Parental fondness loved to trace
The lineaments of one whose bloom
Was withering in an early tomb ;
Nor lacked there, in her customary place,
Dear woman's gentleness and grace.
There sat they ; and that holy time,
The genial spirit of the clime,
Crept to the soul, and lulled each sense
Beneath its soothing influence,—
A paradise of tender feeling,
Where heart to kindred heart was stealing,

Like the soft light of twilight skies,
The diapason of sweet dyes,
Each mellowing down its several tone,
Till all are blended into one.

“ How blest,” the old man cried, “ my lot,
That finds, in this familiar spot,
My own, my sire’s, my children’s hearth,
The dearest, happiest nook on earth !
My soul inhales an influence sweet
From the green turf beneath my feet,
And every tree that waves above
Whispers a well-known voice of love.
Yon giant oak, which tempest-proof
Holds its broad buckler o’er my roof,—
I planted it, in childhood, there ;
I watched its spreading year by year ;
And thus, from youth to manhood’s prime,
I calendered the lapse of time :
But chiefly that majestic river !
How have I watched its course, and never,
Whate’er my mood, have failed to own
Its sympathies of look and tone !

Gliding with softened music by,
It sung my earliest lullaby ;
When hope's first visions blest my sight,
It danced and sparkled with delight ;
How blithe it carolled at my side,
As home I led my blushing bride !
With voice of deeper, tenderer joy,
Gave welcome to my first-born boy ;
And what a wail was on the wave,
When sunk my youngest to his grave !

“ Ye scenes, that are a conscious part
Of that which thinks within my heart,
How oft some solitary sound
Uttered when all is still around,
Some gleam of light or touch of shade,
Where sunbeam or where breeze hath strayed,
Sends my fond spirit dreaming back
Along life's phantom-haunted track,
Calling up thoughts, whose tender power
Hallows the interest of the hour,
And present loves and joys arrays
In the pure light of other days !”

The old man paused ; for, uttered nigh,
A low involuntary sigh
Seemed on its heavy wings to bear
The burthen of a heart's despair.
He turned him, and his startled glance
Fell on his first-born's countenance ;
Blanched to the ashy paleness spread
O'er the stiff features of the dead,
Yet working in convulsive strife
With all the energies of life ;
Well might the father start amazed,
As on that woe-struck face he gazed.
“ Abram, my son,” he cried, “ hath ought
In speech of mine too harshly wrought
Upon thine heart, and lent thy brow
A shade, I never marked till now ?
What, if in memory's backward range,
We needs must meet the face of change ;—
And change, amid life's pleasant things,
Takes off more largely than it brings ;—
Yet, whilst yon dear horizon's girth
Embraces all I love on earth,
Whilst field and forest, stream and hill
Wear their unchanging beauty still,

Whilst household faces round me gather,
And household voices call me ‘ father,’
And kindling eye and glowing cheek
Changeless and deathless love bespeak,
I feel how gently at my side
Old Time his ministry hath plied :
And when, at no far distant date,
The last and sternest change shall come,
Serenely its approach I wait,
In the blest hope to die at home ;—
To die in this my native place,
Where life its tranquil course hath run,
Encircling in a last embrace
The forms of daughter and of son,
Watched by the fond maternal face
Of holy Nature looking on ;—
To lay me down in humble trust,
And sleep amid my kindred dust ;—
Such hope is mine !”

“ Forbear ! forbear !”
Cried Abram, “ Oh, my father, spare
Thy son !—the trial comes at length ;
And speak I must. God grant me strength

To roll this burthen from my mind !

And thou, my honoured sire, attend ;
If never yet I failed to find

In thee a comforter and friend,
Accord me now thy patient ear,
Exclaim not : question not :—but hear !

“ ’Twas in the visions of the night,
When fancy to the inward sight
Embodies thoughts which idly pass,
By day, like shadows o’er the grass,
I dreamed ; and lo, I stood alone,
A stranger, in a land unknown,
And gazed on other fields and trees,
And listed other streams than these :
In the wide landscape marked I not
A trace of one familiar spot ;
And yet, though all was new and strange,
I felt no marvel at the change ;
It seemed that thus abroad to roam
Had grown habitual ; kin and home
Looked dim and distant in the haze
That gathers round departed days,

Like the pale outline of a shore
Long left, and to be trod no more.

“ Right gladly, when the vision fled,
I stretched me on my own dear bed ;
And, peering through the darkness, found
Each well-known object grouped around ;
And heard, amid the silence deep,
Euphrates³ murmuring in his sleep.

“ Morn broke, and with her cheerful beam
Dispelled the memory of my dream ;
Or, if its presence undefined
Hung, like a cloud, about my mind,
'Twas only felt in tenderer zest
For scenes of homely interest,
Beheld but in the lustre thrown

O'er common things which seemed to wear
Hues far more lovely than their own

By some dark contrast lurking near.
Unconscious of a guiding will

I traversed the paternal fields,
And gained the summit of the hill,
When my rapt spirit drank its fill

Of joy which that sweet prospect yields.

Far-stretching pastures fresh and green
Sloped gently downward from the steep :
Around its base, with glancing sheen,
The river led its graceful sweep ;
And, from behind their leafy screen,
I saw our clustered dwellings peep.
My father, thou hast well exprest
The thoughts which kindled in my breast ;
Thine eloquence had power to win
As true an echo from within,
As when that landscape smiling by
Sent in its beauty visibly ;
It seemed but that another sense
Awoke the heart's intelligence.
—Why lingers thus my tale, as fain
A little interval to gain ?—
Like the doomed stream that creeps in fear,
As conscious of the cataract near ;
Now strives in greenwood shades to hide ;
Now toys with flowers that bloom beside ;
Now, in some rock-hewn cavern deep,
Snatches a moment's troubled sleep,—
Yet must, its bootless doublings past,
Dash down the dark abyss at last ;

E'en thus, though dallying by the way
I frame fond pretext for delay,
Reluctant, as the lingering stream,
To approach and grapple with my theme ;
Yet come it must—the dream !—the dream !
Yes, then, while from the upland brow
I communed with the scene below,
Nursing delicious thoughts that dwelt
On all things lovely, till I felt
Each quiet charm of field and tree
Dearer than all the world to me,—
(How shall I paint it ?) then, and there,
Rushed back the dream ;—intensely clear
Its images returned to sight,
Thrown out in strong prophetic light.

“ I know not if my will, perchance,
That vision's meaning had withstood ;
And deemed it but the vague romance
Of Fancy, in her wayward mood :
But then there came *a voice* !—and still
Its words through all my being thrill ;—
Yet whether to the soul they came,
Flashed inward like the levin-flame,

Or whether on the ear they fell
In spoken sounds, I cannot tell.
' Abram,'⁴ it said, ' I bid thee come
Forth from thy kindred and thy home
To a far land which I will show,
Where I will make thy name to grow :
The favour of thy God possessing,
Thou shalt be blest, and be a blessing,—
A blessing to thy friend,—but he
Shall be accursed who curseth thee :
My glory on thy seed shall rest,
And all the world in thee be blest.

" Those words, my father ! earth and sky
Witnessed their dread divinity ;
I heard them sighing in the breeze,
And whispered by the rustling trees ;
I caught them rushing down the stream ;
I saw them written by a beam
Of sunshine on the ground I trod !
Father, *it was the voice of God !*
And I obey : my yearning heart,
Be still ! I must—I will depart."

“ I trust the pang may be forgiven,
Felt when that mandate was revealed,
Whereby all social ties were riven,
The habits of a life repealed,—
That our Almighty Sire above,
Who framed the laws of human love,
Will pardon, if my spirit yet
Shrinks back with passionate regret,
Deeming the good I know and hold
More precious than the good foretold,—
Will pardon, if the word which sent
Me forth in endless banishment
From kin and home and native land
Sound less like promise than command,—
Will own the trembling faith which bears
An offering sullied with her tears,
Content in patience to obey,
And meet the trials of the day,
Albeit she sees through mists of sorrow
Faint token of a brighter morrow.
Nor let me now be deemed ingrate
For blessings on my past estate ;
Nor doubt I, by the way, to trace
The hand that works my future weal,

I can accept the promised grace,
Believing what I fail to feel."

He ceased ; and to his father's eye
Lifted his own inquiringly :
His task was done, and doubt and dread
Passed off and he was comforted.
Not so the sire ; with vacant stare,
As if some shock too stern to bear
Had stunned him into silence there,
He sat, and gazed upon his son
Long space, but utterance found he none,
To give his troubled soul relief ;
One only sign betrayed his grief,—
The tear-drops gathering large and slow
Under the shadow of his brow.
At length from that o'erwhelming stroke
To painful consciousness he woke ;
And faltered forth, " It cannot be !
Such harsh unnatural decree
Is not of God !—I well believe
Some evil spirit might deceive,
Persuading thee to burst the ties
Twined round the hearts of families,—

The bond, that, in its tender thrall,
Links all to one and one to all.
Nor hast thou yet shewn fitting cause
Why God should slight those gracious laws,
Whose sway o'er human hearts makes known
The loving-kindness of his own.
Rest thee, my son !—Alas I see
Thou dost not to my speech agree :
Then hear thy suppliant father sue
For one small favour, as his due ;
A little while in peace remain,
Till that dread voice be heard again,
And God his own behest make plain :
Then I myself will bid thee go,
Nor further strive !”—

“ No, father, no !

The faith which prompts me to obey
Would lose its guerdon by delay :
When God reveals his sovereign will,
We may not question, but fulfil.
Dim mystery her curtain draws
O'er mighty principles and laws,

Which, strong and viewless as the wind,
Work joy or sorrow to mankind :
Yet ofttimes objects I discern,
Whose several aspect, strange or stern,
Receives a gentleness and grace
From contact with its proper place :
Hinting at some harmonious plan,
Coequal with Creation's span,
Where one supreme, benignant Soul
Forms,—fills,—sustains, and guides the whole.

“ My father, when my brother died,
I saw thee stand his bier beside,
And yield him to the God who gave,
With hope that looks beyond the grave :
I've heard thee, with unruffled mien,
Anticipate thine own last scene :
And seems it not a worthier task
To *act*, when God vouchsafes to *ask* ;
With grateful willingness accord
Our free obedience to his word,
When moral power of choice is lent
To grant, or to withhold consent,

Than lay our forehead in the dust,
And yield at last, when yield we must ?
This parting to the eye of faith
Seems like a voluntary death.
We die :—and heaven-taught faith descries
The opening gates of paradise :
We part :—faith cheers me on my road ;
Faith points me to a fair abode,—
My future home, divinely drest
In all the charms that sweeten rest,
Broad pastures of perennial green,
Grand hills and flowery vales between,
Where I, a childless man erewhile,
Shall see my sons around me smile,
And find domestic joys as dear
As those that made life happy here.

“ Nay more ! prophetic visions throng,
Marching in radiant pomp along ;
I see a line of kings pass by !
I see my future progeny !
And, lo, the last ! a wondrous star
Is kindling in the East afar :

Heaven rings with high angelic mirth,
‘ Glory to God, and peace on earth !’
Echoing the mighty tongues of heaven,
Man hails his natal morn,
And cries, ‘ To us a Son is given !
To us a child is born !’
The barren wilderness rejoices ;
The ancient hills lift up their voices ;
The fertile plain its flowers expands ;
The solemn forests clap their hands :
The thrones of earth confess his sway ;
Her warriors fling their swords away ;
Peace spreads abroad her dove-like wings,
And Power proclaims him **KING OF KINGS**.
High hopes ! bright prospects ! Let me go
To the far land which God will show,
‘ Where He will make my name to grow !’
Faith binds the promise to my breast,
‘ *In thee shall all the world be blest.*’ ”

“ Yet ah, my recreant heart ! in vain
It calls on faith to loose the chain,
And set its fond affections free
From this my native home and thee !

Faith guides my steps, and sways my will,
But here my heart is lingering still."

" And thou, dear father, couldst thou know
How deep the bitter waters flow,
Through which I tremblingly essay
To follow, where God leads the way,
Thou would'st not aggravate their force
By vain repinings and remorse.
A little time,—a few brief years,
Chequered with earth-born smiles and tears,
Must yet be gathered to the past,
And then, where'er our lot be cast,
I trust the welcome day shall come,
When we shall meet,—and meet AT HOME.
Farewell! may others prove to thee
What I have been, and thought to be.
Cherish my memory, when I'm gone :
Farewell! my father, bless thy son !"

Uprose the old man from the ground,
And cast his wistful eyes around ;
And here and there they paused a space,
To rest upon some favourite place ;

Then, straightway turning to his son
He grasped his hand ;—

“ God’s will be done !

I yield ! but oh, forbid me not
To share the burthen of thy lot !
The God who sends thee forth to roam
Commands not me to dwell at home.
—Yes, thou dear spot of native earth,
Vainly thou spread’st thy beauties forth !
Flourish my fields ! thou mighty river,
Flow on, as bright and fresh as ever !
Your spell is burst : I could not bear
 To meet your aspect, day by day,
When those whose presence made you dear
 Are wandering far away :
Ye would but make my lonely fate
Appear more deeply desolate.
Let us begone ! for many a year
Together have we sojourned here ;
Nor bitter thought, nor angry word
The quiet of our home hath stirred ;
And wherefore should the one in heart
Constrain themselves to dwell apart ?

May we not deem the heavenly call
Addressed to one, but meant for all ;
Our altered destinies fulfil,
In exile, but *together* still ?
Love asks no leave of time or place
To shew the brightness of his face :
Love, like the sunshine and the air,
Warms and refreshes everywhere,
Our household-god,—with power no less
To sanctify the wilderness.”

Ah, poor old man ! thy heart was strong,
But rugged was the way and long !
Travel its sternest aspect wore
To one who knew not toil before ;
And weary fell the foot of age,
Urged on in daily pilgrimage ;
And many a plain behind was cast,
And many a painful hill o'erpast,
But forward far, o'er vale and hill,
Pointed the guiding Spirit still.
What marvel that his feeble strength
Gave up the hopeless task at length,

And from his wanderings and his woes
Sought, in the welcome grave, repose?

And Abram saw his dreams fulfilled !
Deep memories his bosom thrilled,
As once, from daylight's cares released,
He sat him down to rest,
Looking ⁵ towards Hai on the east
And Bethel on the west ;
And there, outstretching at his feet,
As if arrayed his eyes to greet,
In evening's tender light and shade,
The very landscape was displayed,
Which, on that memorable night,
Was pictured to his mental sight,
When in his dream he stood alone,
A stranger in a land unknown ;
Each feature so distinctly plain,—
He almost thought he dreamed again :
And hark, a still small voice ! the same
Which erst on sterner mission came,—
Deep as the distant thunders roll,
But sweet as music to the soul,—

He knew it well, and bowed his head
Low on his breast, and worshipped,
Awaiting with attention meek
To hear what God the Lord should speak.

“ Abram, arise ; dismiss thy fear ;
I am the Lord who brought thee here !
Me as thy shield of strength regard,
And thine exceeding great reward.
Look upward on a starry night ;
If thou canst tell each point of light
That sparkles through the infinite,
Or if, by calculation just,
Thou canst compute each grain of dust,
That strews the earth beneath thy tread,
Then may thy seed be numbered.
Throned on this mountain-height, look forth
From east to west, from south to north,
Or walk the borders of the land,
From Nilus to thy native river,
I grant possession to thy hand,—
To thee and to thy seed for ever.”

‘ These things are written for our admonition ;’
And here our imaged destiny we see !

Methinks, dear sister, by no strange transition,
My spirit turned from tender thoughts of thee
To one, who not inaptly claims to be
The prototype of all, whose early vision
Of household joys hath broken and departed,
And left them to the world, alone and weary-hearted.

Once, since we left it, have I seen our home !
For so I call that ever dear abode,
Where dwelt our perfect household, and the bloom
Of our fresh feelings in their spring-tide glowed,
Ere care and death their ghastly faces showed ;
—Once have I dared revisit it,—the room
Where oft we sat, when all the house grew mute,
Feeding on midnight talk, our sweet forbidden fruit.

I trod the garden walks,—I saw the seat
Beneath the tree, o'erlooking, as of old,
Those ancient pits which opened at our feet
A gorgeous wilderness of green and gold,
When furze and broom their summer hues unfold ;
I pressed the turf unsinged by noontide heat,
Where the great fir-grove stoops upon the fen,
And bade the past restore its blissful scenes again.

And wherefore not ? our names were on the trees,
Graven with our childish fingers, and on high
That old mysterious murmur, like far seas,
Haunting the summer-noon's tranquillity :
I called upon the past !—and days gone by
Gave up their treasures ! but alas, with these
Pale⁶ spectres came, that filled my soul with dread,—
The faces of the changed, the distant, and the dead !

Yet why was memory given—the power
To crowd into one thoughtful hour
Visions with varied interest rife,
Roused from the past abyss of life ?
Not that the soul should lapse away
Into fond dreams of yesterday,
Then wake, to greet with languid eyes
To-day's more grave realities :
Rather, in gentlest holiest light,
She brings the solemn truth to sight,
(Truth, which at distance deemed severe,
Grows kindlier as it draws more near,)
That here, amid the things of time
Touched with the withering taint of crime,

We may not seek, and shall not find
Rest for the imperishable mind.

Thanks for such gentle teaching ! more,
For deeper and diviner lore ;
Wherewith the Spirit from above,
Tempering high truth with boundless love,
Imparts a clear, harmonious sense
To life's most strange experience !

“ We see our calling ! ” forth we fare
From the loved haunts of childish mirth
To ⁷ a far land, we wot not where,
“ Strangers and pilgrims upon earth.”
“ We seek enduring habitations,”
A bright and beautiful abode ;
“ We seek a city with foundations,
Its builder and its maker, God.”
Each word to ancient patriarch spoken
Hath proved to us its promise true ;
And ours is many a type and token
Of grace, which patriarch never knew.
God manifest in human form
Strengthens, and speeds us on our way,

By⁸ night “ a shelter from the storm,”
“ A shadow from the heat ” by day.
He⁹ took no high angelic nature,
But Abraham’s humbler seed he chose,
With human heart and voice and feature
To share, as well as soothe our woes.
Sweet sister, He hath given thee power
With more than common ills to cope :
And glorified thy darkest hour
With gleams of heavenly peace and hope.
Fain would we trust thy future years
A happier destiny may prove ;
(For thou hast all thy brother’s prayers,
And more than all thy brother’s love.)
Yet, let the future smile or mourn,
To us a glorious place is given
With¹⁰ the great “ church of the first-born,
Whose names are registered in heaven.”
Beyond the bounds of time’s expansion,
Where change and sorrow never come,
We’re¹¹ journeying to the promised mansion
Made ready in our Father’s home.
Friends, kindred, loving and beloved,
That wont on earth our lot to cheer

Thither are, one by one, removed,
And we shall find them *settled there*.
Enough ! let sin and pain and death
This transitory world infest ;
Those ¹² who attain to Abraham's faith
Shall be with faithful Abraham blest.

NOTES.

¹ “Touched with his golden finger.”—WORDSWORTH.

² “Haran begat Lot: and Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.”—Gen. xi. 27, 28.

³ “The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran.”—Acts vii. 2.

⁴ “Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great: and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”—Gen. xii. 1—3.

⁵ “He removed thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, having Bethel on the west and Hai on the east.”—Gen. xii. 8. It appears that Abram returned to this place after his residence in Egypt. Gen. xiii. 3. The author has taken the liberty of throwing together into one speech the distinguishing features of several addresses made at different times and places by God to Abram before his final settlement in the plain of Mamre. “Fear not, Abram...I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees...I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars: if

thou be able to number them...so shall thy seed be...And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth ; so that, if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered...Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it ; for I will give it unto thee...from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates...to thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever."—Gen. xiii. 14—17 ; xv. 1, 5, 7, 18.

6 " They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead."

LADY OF THE LAKE.

7 See Heb. xi. 8—16.

8 " Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress ; a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat."—Isa. xxv. 4 ; see also Isa. xxxii. 2.

9 " For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham : wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren," &c.—Heb. ii. 16, 17.

10 " Ye are come . . . to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven."—Heb. xii. 23.

11 " In my Father's house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you."—John xiv. 2.

12 " So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."—Gal. iii. 9.

THE
CROSS PLANTED
UPON THE
HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS.

THE POEM WHICH OBTAINED THE SEATONIAN
PRIZE IN THE YEAR 1842.

The vast hills in fluctuation fixed
At thy command, how awful! Shall the mind,
Human and rational, report of Thee
Even less than these?—Be mute who may, who can,
Yet will I praise thee with impassioned voice :
My lips, that might forget Thee in the crowd,
Cannot forget Thee here ; where Thou hast built,
For thine own glory, in the wilderness !
Me didst Thou constitute a priest of thine,
In such a temple as we now behold
Reared for thy presence.—

“ DESPONDENCY CORRECTED.”

(*The Excursion*, BOOK IV.)

THE
CROSS PLANTED
UPON THE
HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS.

THE mountain breeze ! the mountain breeze !
In glen and dingle nurst,
Once more thy spirit to inhale
My inmost soul's athirst !
I know thee from a thousand winds
Bred upon sea or shore ;
None with a privilege like thine
Rifles the wild-thyme's store,
And none with such a power of voice
Maketh the pine-trees roar !

Ah woe is me ! the city grows !

Each year with wider span
Enforceth on the abhorrent fields

The advancing tide of man ;
Old manor-house and village-spire
From their coëval shades retire ;

And, vaunting over these,
Chimeras hatched in civic brains
Fright from the desecrated plains
Their patriarchal trees.

Yet beauty with the spring hath birth ;
And joy runs riot upon earth

In this bright genial weather !
I know the mountains far away
Are happy, as when I and they
Kept holiday together.

I know it ! Would that I were free
To sweep afar o'er land and sea,
Untrammelled by the laws that bind
The faltering footsteps of mankind !
Whither away ?—to sit and dream
By Rotha's Genii-haunted stream ?
Or commune with the sylphs of air
Enthroned on ¹Idris' craggy chair ?

Or taste the stormy joy that thrills
 The hunter of Helvetian hills ?
 Or climb on venturous quest to know
 The secrets of the condor's nest,
 Where Andes, with his fire-scathed brow,
 Frowns o'er the waters of the West ?
 Ah no !—but were it mine to roam
 Where'er the heart its impulse lent,
 I would go seek for Beauty's home
 Deep in the glowing Orient.

The East ! the incense-breathing East !
 Thou art the shrine for Nature's priest !
 It is not that Imäus rears
 His head above his mountain peers ;
 Nor that all summer's wealth discloses
 Nought lovelier than ²Cashmerian roses ;
 Nor that sweet music's softest tone
 So haunts the Ganges all day long,
 That you might think the stream flows on
 A liquid element of song :
 Say rather that a spell profound
 Is laid on every scene and sound ;—
 Its light illumines the mountain snows,—
 Its soul is breathing from the rose,—

Its voice to simplest song imparts
Strange mastery over listening hearts,—
A spell by local Genii caught
Up from the old-world depths of thought,
Scattering o'er mountains, flowers and streams
Of Truth's pure sunshine broken gleams—
Broken and coloured, as they pass
Through Fantasy's prismatic glass.

Fair land ! thy common earth and skies
Might make a poet's paradise !
And, if alas, the touch of crime
Have marred the glory of thy prime,
Still Hope, fond seraph, lingering near,
Brushes from Memory's cheek the tear,
And tells us that thy mountains high
Stand upward-gazing to the sky ;
That rugged oak and cedar fair
Bow down their stately heads in prayer ;
And oft, 'mid evening's shadowy calm,
There steal strange whispers from the palm ;
And multitudes of radiant things
Spread to the sun their glossy wings,
Or paint with liveliest hues the sod,
Expectant of a coming God—

The God whose peace-proclaiming word
Will sheath the cherub's fiery sword,
And to the banished sons of men
Fling wide their Eden's gates again.

Ye rosy clouds that float away,
Seeking the ambrosial fount of day,
Oh, were it mine to wander through
The trackless firmament with you ;
And drop, with you, to genial rest
On some far eastern mountain's breast !

Go to !—the spirit with disdain
Spurns off the body's cumbrous chain !
Exulting in her proper might,

She asks no aid of clouds above,
To waft her on her vagrant flight

Questing the object of her love :
One effort of her sovereign will—

A will no power on earth resisteth—
And here she sits, and takes her fill

Of beauty, whatsoe'er she listeth :
Late inmate of a narrow room
Sunk in monotony of gloom :
But now !—afar—above—around—
Beautiful sight, and rapturous sound !

Lo the frolic lights and shadows
Chasing each other o'er the meadows ;
And shy gleams, through dancing leaves,
Which the dewy turf receives ;
Or the stream which carols on,
Heedless if in shade or sun :
Far aloft the mountains tower,
Watching over field and bower,
With a smile upon their face,
Conscious that to them is given
To³ connect the landscape's grace
With the pageantry of heaven !

Arise then, O my soul, and say
What scene thy bidding shall obey ?
And wilt thou o'er thy visions brood
In meditative solitude,
Or summon (for the power is thine)
Some kindred spirit to thy shrine ?

Bold choice is thine ! yet wondrous well
Earth's grandeur answers to thy spell ;
And Heaven itself might fail to send,
For fellowship, a worthier friend :—

A friend ?—Ah yes ! though never yet
Our mortal eyes in greeting met,
And I am still on earth, and thou
A blessed-one in glory now,
Yet oft, dear Heber, have I felt
The joy that in thy presence dwelt :
Hath not my spirit breathed with thine
The balmy airs of Palestine ?
Have we not bathed in Silöa's rill,
And climbed the olive-sprinkled hill,
And wept beneath each conscious tree
That glooms o'er sad Gethsemane ?
And, when our God upon thine head
The consecrating oil had shed,
And girt thee with the two-edged sword,
To do the battles of the Word,
Where savage beast and barbarous man
Prowl o'er the wastes of Hindostan,—
I seemed thy generous toil to share,
And followed thee with love and prayer :
Thine was the Christian martyr's soul,
Panting to reach its heavenly goal ;
And thine sweet shades of natural feeling
O'er thy sublimer spirit stealing,

And lending it a charm of power,
As when some homely, way-side flower
Looks up amid the rich parterre,
All unabashed by splendors there—
In nature's confidence looks up,
Offering to heaven its dewy cup,
And winning from the gazer's eye
A glance of special sympathy :
Thus,⁴ rife with grace, whose type was found
In the sealed garden's mystic ground,
Where grew choice spice-trees many a one,
Camphire and myrrh and cinnamon,—
Rich in the lore of every clime,
Philosophy matured by time,
Song-flowers with many-coloured gleam
Gladdening the groves of Academe,
Thine was a heart as childhood's warm
To nature's wildest, simplest charm :
On hoary peak or beetling cliff
Thine eye read many a hieroglyph ;
And gentler things—the clouds that spread
Their wings above the day-god's bed,
The calm wave's smile, the voice that dwells
In the far-winding depth of shells,

The rose's blush, the jasmine's sigh,
The tear drop in the violet's eye,—
All spake to thee ; earth, air, and ocean
Claimed interest in thy pure devotion.

Oh, is not this the place—the time
For converse holy and sublime ?
Here rest we : Gaughur's mighty brow
Shall be our mount of vision now.

—Not yet ! not yet !—All still as death—
The height above, the depth beneath !
Above—a few faint drowsy stars
Watch till young Day heaven's gate unbars :
Below—yon masses of black shade
Mark where in deadly woods is laid
The coil of that umbrageous chain,
Which girds the mountains to the plain ;
Down to the horizon's utmost rim
The east is colourless and dim ;
No hovering cloud as yet hath won
A distant greeting from the sun.—
But, lo !—What prodigies are there,
Kindling the northern hemisphere ?

•

Points of pure, pallid light, enshrined
Deep in the abysmal dark behind !
More ! more ! weird lamps ! a mighty range
Of beacons !—Now the colours change !
The pure pale light grows warm and tender—
Pomegranate-blossoms fused in splendor !
Ah me ! the pageant, spreading fast,
Takes semblance of a city vast :
Based on the clouds, methinks I see
The bulwarks of eternity,—
Gigantic towers of living fire,
Dome, pillar, pinnacle, and spire :
And, high o'er all, aloft, alone—
—Are they the footsteps of a throne ?
Tier beyond tier, and height o'er height,
Lost in their own mysterious light !
Tell me, thou man of God ; for thou
Hast entered with undazzled brow
 The Godhead's dwelling-place,—
Hast stood before the sapphire throne,
And him—the Power that sits thereon—
Hast seen him, face to face :—
Oh give the wondrous scene a voice !
Oh grant me license to rejoice !

Is it the Vision seen erewhile
By the lone saint in Patmos isle,
What time in spirit he was led
To some mysterious mountain's head,
And saw, descending from on high,
Walls of celestial jewelry,
Built upon stones, as crystal bright,
Amethyst, emerald, chrysolite,
And gates set open day and night,—
Each gate a single gem?
Oh, tell me, do I now behold
The city of transparent gold,
The New Jerusalem?

“ No, dreamer, no !—albeit I marvel not
Such scene strange fancies in thy mind hath wrought :
Eye hath not seen, nor mortal heart conceived—
Though hope pourtrayed, and reverent faith be-
lieved,—
The glory of those mansions reared above,
Homes for the children of Almighty Love :
Yet I remember, when, like thee, I gazed
On those dread peaks, admiring and amazed,

My spirit kindled at the strange revealing
Of God's grand work, and felt—as thou art feeling.
Lo, now the ethereal pageant melts from sight,
All disenchanted by the common light !

Yet mayest thou stand, and worship ; earth can
show

No worthier temple than yon spires of snow ;
Worship the God,⁶ whose silent presence fills
The awful solitude of yonder hills :
He built them, emblems to man's sight and sense
Of Power supreme, immutable, immense. /

Aye, there they stand, as in creation's prime,
Above the mouldering wrecks of sin and time !
Man's fatal fall, which all beneath them cursed,
Hath left them standing as they stood at first :
Unchallenged still they keep their place in heaven,
And wear the diadem their God hath given ;
And change and death sweeps on o'er sea and land,
And finds, and leaves them changeless :—there they
stand."

" Sooth speakest thou, my heavenly friend ;
Presumptuous fancy needs reproof,

To teach her where her functions end,
And curb her when she soars aloof ;
Else, of some earthly type possest,
She fondly deems her daring eyes
Behold the glories which invest
Heaven's yet unseen realities.
So deemed the earlier saints, when first
Upon Judæa's mountains burst
The day-spring from on high ;
Oh then, what visions of delight
Came forth, as from the womb of night
To Hope's impatient eye !
Portent on portent crowded fast,
Each rising grander than the last :
' And what,' they cried, ' shall bar the road
Of sunshine, when it streams abroad ?
What human—what infernal foes
The godlike Conqueror oppose ?
Lo, death and hell from empire hurled !
And all the kingdoms of the world
Full soon for God's anointed Son
Shall blend their myriad crowns in one !'
Intent upon that blessed hope,
They proved its energy to cope

With hardship, pain and loss,—
‘ The coming of the Lord draws nigh,
Stand firm, and quit you valiantly,
Ye soldiers of the Cross !’
Ill would those ardent souls have borne,
Who ever, at the burst of morn,
A look of expectation sent
Into the opening firmament,
And listened, as the whirlwind pass’d,
For the great Angel’s trumpet-blast,
That sun and stars should set, and rise
On eighteen weary centuries,
And sin the while its sway uphold,
And faith grow weak, and love grow cold,
And the great promise slumber still
’Mid secrets of the Eternal will.

Oh Heber, if some struggling rays
Have glanced across these latter days,
If, here and there, a feeble few
Would fain the ancient hope renew,
Must we again in sadness own
The ray eclipsed—the hope o’erthrown ?

Thou know'st how earnest hearts beat high,
How eager tongues did prophesy,
When Albion 'gainst her atheist foes,
Strong in the might of Truth, arose,
And to the Daughter of the sea
God⁷ gave ' the gorgeous East in fee.'
Methought,⁸ by angel hands upraised,
Her bannered cross triumphant blazed

On Nundideva's head :

The mountains hailed the sacred sign,
And all along their jagged line
Contagious gladness spread ;
Charged with the news a thousand rills
Sped forth, swift couriers from the hills ;
Great Sampû⁹ burst his icy chains,
And shouted to the northern plains ;
Far eastward Barrampûtra's voice
Bade the grim wilderness rejoice ;
Down rushed the sister-streams¹⁰ with glee
From the twy peaks of Gungo-trî ;
Hydaspes¹¹ o'er his sands of gold
Wavelets of gentlest music rolled,
Till mighty Indus caught the strain,
And told it to the western main.

An hundred years are past and gone,
Since first on Mahadeva's¹² throne

The Christian sign was reared ;
And did the omen from on high
Cast down the ruthless deity,
While Albion's angel smiling by

Her Christian warriors cheered ?
Hath Mercy singing in their van
Published the Evangel's wondrous plan,
And to the tribes of Hindostan,
Bowed like the spirit of one man,

The Christian's God endeared ?
No !—Ganga's corpse-cumbered stream,
The murdered widow's stifled scream,
The bones that strew Orissa's plain,¹³
The tortured fakîrs' yells of pain,
The groans of pilgrims left to die,
Mixed with the prowling jackal's cry,
The frantic shouts that peal afar,
When Lust's¹⁴ red demon yokes his car,
All ghastly sounds and shapes of woe
Return the accusing answer,—No !

Alas,¹⁵ my country ! deeper shame
Dogs the fair footsteps of thy fame.

Was 't not enough with careless eyes
To slight the hideous sacrifice ?
And are those warriors sons of thine,
Who, wheeled into embattled line,
Salute with shaded brow and eye
The hell-god as he marches by ?
Pleads he thy claim, that imp of state,
Who haunts the temple's guarded gate,
And, ere the infernal rites begin,
Sells the poor pagan leave to sin ?

And ¹⁶ hear'st thou not a warning sound,
Like that which from her sleep profound
 Made guilty Zion start,—
Which burst her Temple gates asunder,
Proclaiming with the tongue of thunder,
 ‘ Arise, let us depart ?’
Imäus from his lofty seat
Hath seen thy blazoned cross retreat,
And, as thy legions backward rushed,
Deeply his conscious snows have blushed ;
And the five streams, whose blended force
Spurs Indus on his downward course,
 Have learned another song ;

And Albion's angel stands aghast,
As the dread spirit of the past,
Summoned before the Throne at last,
Opens his tale of wrong ;
And those, whose eager hearts took fire,
Much hoping what they most desire,
Mourn, as their dreams of bliss retire,
And, sick with hope deferred, inquire,
‘ How long, O Lord, how long ? ’ ”

“ Poor mortal ! ever, as thy words attest,
Too soon elated, and too soon depressed ;
Eager to build thine overweening trust
On the fail promise of some child of dust ;
Flushed with high hope, and shouting loud applause,
When man affiances the Almighty's cause ;
But, should his fickle purpose melt in air,
Prostrate in grief, abandoned to despair !
Pause !—let Imäus teach thee : let him speak
In God's behalf from every glittering peak !
Who dares affirm, while he is towering there,
God wants a witness¹⁷ or a worshipper ?¹⁸
Albeit those peaks since time his course began,
Ne'er saw the face, nor heard the voice of man ;

No footstep, soiled by guilt or grief below,
E'er dimmed the whiteness of that virgin snow ;
Unheeded passed the demigods of War—
Sesostris, Krishna, Tamerlane, Akbâr ;
Old empires waned,—new dynasties bore rule,—
Persian or Greek, Karasmian or Mogûl :
But the calm hills, ¹⁹ where cloud nor breeze came
nigh,

To mar the quiet of their sovereignty,
Remote alike from human grief or mirth,
Kept their long Sabbath between heaven and earth.

‘ Lift up thine eyes unto the hills :’—and thence
Take courage :—let their still magnificence
Announce that o’er the tides of human lot
There reigns Eternal Truth that changeth not.
Yon mountains *seem* to change :²⁰ when morning fair
Thrills with keen light the pure and frosty air,
Such dazzling pomp the hoary kings display,
Thou scarce wouldst deem them fifty miles away :
A few brief hours, and, when the noon’s red eye
Winks through the vapours of the sultry sky,
Those forms, that late such massive strength avowed,
Scarce boast the outline of the frailest cloud :

Thus, though God's Truth to human faith appear,
Seen through a varying medium, far or near,
It bides the same!—mountains shall pass away,
But the great promise, firmer far than they,
Amid time's giant wrecks shall stand alone,
The eternal bulwark of a Saviour's throne.

Why then despond for India? wherefore deem
Those cherished hopes the fabric of a dream?
The statesman's policy, the soldier's sword,
Full rarely fights the battles of the Lord:
His peaceful kingdom ²¹ o'er the realm of mind
"Comes not with observation" to mankind:
Not 'mid the headstrong battle's stormy flood,
"Confused noise and garments rolled in blood,"
But, where the gentler virtues bloom around,
The genuine warriors of the Cross are found—
"The holy and the humble men of heart," ²²
Striving and suffering from the world apart.
For conquering Clive or Wellesley's mightier name
The wide world echoes to the tramp of fame,
Yet have there been, who saintlier praise have won,
Undaunted Schwartz, and saintly Middleton,

And he—²³ that gentlest martyr to the truth,
Who in the spring-time of his radiant youth,
Forsaking learning's halls and love's retreat,
Laid his meek laurels at his Saviour's feet :

England hath many such : she little knows
What to their secret championship she owes ;
Their prayers, which night and day to heaven aspire,
Bulwark²⁴ her empire with a wall of fire,
And arm the happy land that gave them birth
With power to build the throne of Christ on earth."

" Shall Britain then ——— ?"

" Fond questionist, be still !

I said, *she may*,—I dare not add, *she will*.
Yet rest content : there was a time when I,
In the first glow of youthful poesie,
Believed I saw the shadows pass away,
And the light ' shining unto perfect day ;'
Methought, the Lamb had broke the final seal ;
I heard the vocal thunder's²⁵ sevenfold peal ;
' E'en now,'²⁶ I sang, ' wide waving o'er the land,
The mighty angel lifts his golden wand,
Courts the bright vision of descending Power,
Tells²⁷ every gate, and measures every tower.'

Boldly I braced the Christian's armour on,
And dreamed of victories gained, and trophies won ;
I dreamed myself the Lord's anointed priest,
To wake to life the churches of the East :
I saw the cross upon Imäus' crest
Shed its mild influence on a world at rest ;
Glad India hailed her Saviour's opening reign ;
And China's millions echoed back the strain ;
And far and wide Australian isles among
The great sea lifted up his voice and sung.

Was the dream false ? Nay, time shall prove it
true :

Not false,—but *future* was the scene I drew ;
Herein I erred, that my ambitious heart
In the Lamb's triumph claimed too proud a part :
Faith asks no leave from Fancy to behold
What God's own hand hath traced in lines of gold ;
But Fancy dares, on selfish aims intent,
To fix the time and choose the instrument.
' Be sober then, be vigilant ;' forbear
To hope or covet ought beyond thy sphere ;
Only be strong to labour, and ²⁸allow
Thy Master's will to appoint thee *where* and *how*.

Serve God ! And winter's cold or summer's heat,
 The breezy mountain or the dusty street,—
 Scene, season, circumstance, alike shall be
 His welcome ministers of joy to thee.

His ' kingdom is within thee : ' rise and prove

A present earnest of the bliss above !

Heaven knows not disappointment ;—earth alone

Mourns wishes unfulfilled, and hope o'erthrown :

Pass but the golden gates—distrust and doubt—

The brood of guilt and fear—are left without ;

Once bathe thine eyes in Heaven's essential light,

Which²⁹ casts no shadow, and expects no night,

And all God's mighty works and wondrous ways

Shall wake no thought that will not speak in praise ;

For thou shalt see Him as He is,—and then

Shalt own that ' GOD IS LOVE.'—

“ Amen ! Amen ! ”

NOTES.

¹ Y CADER IDRIS : the Chair of Idris.

² “ Who hath not heard of the vale of Cashmere,
With its roses, the brightest that earth ever gave ?

The Light of the Harem, (LALLAH ROOKH.)

³ When these two lines were written, it was with no suspicion that they were not original. It was not without a feeling of unpleasant surprise that in reading Wordsworth’s “ Lines on revisiting Tintern Abbey,” the trick of latent memory was detected, and she was obliged (if not to part with) at least to acknowledge her borrowed plumes. The idea was clearly due to an impression left upon the mind by the following lines—

“ Once again

Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs

That on a wild secluded scene impress

Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; *and connect*

The landscape with the quiet of the sky.”

⁴ “ A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse ; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of

pomegranates with pleasant fruits ; camphire with spikenard, spikenard with saffron ; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense ; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices.”—Song of Solomon, iv. 12—14.

⁵ The author has experienced a feeling of reluctance (probably not imperceptible,) to grapple with the main feature of his subject. He has been awe-smitten into silence, whenever in imagination he drew near that scene of indescribable magnificence. When at last he did venture into its presence, he was fain to lean upon the friendly hand of that great high-priest of Nature, Wordsworth.

For the idea presented in the description of day-break on the snowy chain of the Himalaya, he is mainly indebted to a wonderful passage in the second book of “The Excursion,” depicting some of the æreal phenomena, whereby the mountains are sometimes transfigured into shapes of celestial grandeur and glory.

There is strong similarity between the outline of the snowy peaks, as seen from Mount Gaughur, and an enormous city.—The following extract from Bishop Heber’s Journal, describes the scene referred to in the text :—

“ We arrived at the gorge of the pass in an indent between the two principal summits of Mount Gaughur, near 8,600 feet above the sea.

“ And now the snowy mountains, which had been so long eclipsed, opened on us in full magnificence. To describe a view of this kind is only lost labour, and I found it nearly impossible to take a sketch of it : such as I was able to make, I however send with this packet.

“ Nundidevi was immediately opposite. Kedar-Nâth was not visible from our present situation ; and Meru only seen as a very distant single peak. The eastern mountains, however, for which I have obtained no name, rose into very great con-

sequence, and were very glorious objects, as we wound down the hill on the other side. The guides could only tell me that they were a great way off, and bordered upon the Chinese empire."—HEBER's *Journal*, vol. i. p. 481.

"Nundidevi," writes Bishop Heber, "the highest peak in the world, is stated to be 25,689 feet above the sea, and 4,000 higher than Chimborazo. The peak which the chuprasses call Meru is properly Sumeru, as distinguished from the modern Pundits, at least, from the celestial and fabulous one: it is really, however, pretty near the source of the Ganges, and about 23,000 feet high.

"Kedar-Nâth, Gungotrî, Sumerû, and Nundidevi, are all within the British territory."—HEBER's *Journal*, Vol. i. p. 492.

⁶ "The reason that I am so much more impressed with the present view is partly the mysterious idea of awful and inaccessible remoteness, attached to the Indian Caucasus, the centre of earth—

'Its Altar, and its Cradle, and its Throne.'

And still more the knowledge, derived from books, that the objects now before me are really among the greatest earthly works of the Almighty Creator's hands—the highest spots below the moon—out-topping by many hundred feet the summits of Cotopasi and Chimborazo."—HEBER's *Journal*, Vol. i. p. 451.

Some idea of the immense altitude and majesty of these mountains may be gathered from Bishop Heber's description of his first view of them: "We had a first view of the range of the Himalaya, indistinctly seen through the haze, but not so indistinctly as to conceal the general form of the mountains. The nearer hills are blue, and, in outline and tints, resemble pretty much those which close in the valley of Clwyd. Above these rose, what might have been taken for clouds, had not their seat been so stationary, and their outline so harsh and

pyramidal—the patriarchs of the continent, perhaps the surviving ruins of a former world, white and glistening as alabaster, and, even at this distance of probably 150 miles, towering over the nearer and secondary range, as much as those last (though said to be 7,600 feet high) are above the plain on which we were standing.

“ At the foot of the lowest hills a long, black, level line extends—so black and level, that it might seem to be drawn with ink and a ruler. This is the forest, from which we are still removed several coss, though the country already begins to partake of its insalubrity. The natives call the malaria, with which this forest is haunted, ‘ Essence of Owl.’ ”

Speaking of the nearer view, in climbing over the neck of Mount Gaughur, Bishop Heber thus records his feelings : “ I never saw such prospects before, and had formed no adequate idea of such. My attention was completely strained, and my eyes filled with tears : everything around was so wild and magnificent, that man appeared as nothing, and I felt myself as if climbing the steps of the Altar of God’s great Temple.”—*HEBER’S Journal*, vol. i. p. 480.

7 “ Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee
And was the safeguard of the West.”

WORDSWORTH.

Sonnet on the Extinction of the Venetian Republic.

⁸ There is a curious coincidence with this idea in Isaiah xviii. 2, 3, where a land is described “ that sendeth ambassadors by the sea...saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto...All ye inhabitants of the world, see ye, when he *lifteth up an ensign on the mountains*, &c.” See also verse 7.

⁹ This river has its source in the northern flank of the Himalaya, and then takes an eastward course towards Assam. It

was long supposed that the Barrampûtra was a continuation of the same, but recent discoveries have brought this conjecture into disrepute. Lieutenant P. P. Burlton is stated to have discovered the source of the Barrampûtra in a range of snowy mountains in 28° N. lat. and $96^{\circ} 10'$ E. long.

¹⁰ The Ganges and Jumna.

¹¹ Ihylum, Behut or Vidusta, the "fabulosus Hydaspes" of Horace, has its source in the S. E. corner of the valley of Cashmere.

¹² The five mighty peaks of the Roodroo Himala, otherwise denominated Mahadeva Calinga, the throne of Mahadeva or Siva, the Hindu "God of Justice or Vengeance," as Vishnu was the Preserver or Saviour. In a vast semicircular hollow, hemmed in by the five giant summits of the Roodroo, the Bhagirathi (the earliest feeder of the Ganges) takes its rise. From the brow of an immense precipice of snow three hundred feet high, and immediately above the outlet of the stream, large hoary icicles descend. These are called "the hair of Mahadeva," from which, according to the Shasters, the Ganges flows.—HODGSON'S *Travels to the Source of the Ganges*.

¹³ From a town called Buddruck, in the province of Orissa, Dr. Buchanan writes, "We know that we are approaching Juggernât, (and yet we are more than fifty miles from it,) by the human bones which we have seen for some days strewed by the way."

¹⁴ Juggernât.—For a description of the horrid scenes witnessed during one of the festivals of this idol, reference is made to Dr. Buchanan's letters. He remarks, "the dogs, jackals, and vultures, seem to live here upon human prey; the vultures exhibit a shocking tameness."

¹⁵ Some of the abuses here specified have, it is hoped, been mitigated, but very lately.

¹⁶ "The Eastern Gate of the Interior Temple," writes Jo-

sephus, "which is brazen throughout, and of immense weight, and which used to be shut in the evening by the joint effort of twenty men, which was moreover supported upon hinges cased in iron, and had bolts very deeply shot into the lintel of solid stone,—appeared about the sixth hour of the night (midnight) open of its own accord. Certain priests who happened to be near the Inner Shrine, stated that they perceived first a movement and a loud noise as of stamping, and afterwards a multitudinous voice exclaiming *METABAINOMEN ENTEΘEN.*" Tacitus, in his short way, mentions the same circumstance: "*Expassæ repente delubri fores; et audita major humanâ vox, 'Excedere Deos: ' simul ingens motus excedentium.*"—*Histor.* v. 13.

¹⁷ "Hear, O ye mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel."—*Micah* vi. 2.

¹⁸ "The perpetual hills did bow."—*Habakkuk* iii. 6.

¹⁹ The upper stratum of clouds varies in altitude from about 10,000 to 15,000 feet: above this level, any vapour that may exist partakes of the extreme rarity of the atmosphere in which it floats. The same may be said of winds, which at the immense altitude of some of the highest peaks of the Himalaya, would probably be scarcely if at all perceptible.

²⁰ "I thought them particularly grand when seen in the grey of the morning, while their cold distinct outline was visible along the dark sky, with no refraction to puzzle, or vapours to conceal it. At other times their forms vary according to the shifting lights and shadows; and, if it were not for the identity of situation, I could sometimes have doubted whether the peaks which I saw in the haze of noon, were the same with those, which, in the crimson light of the setting or the amber

brilliancy of the rising sun, had delighted me in so different a manner.”—HEBER’S *Journey*, vol. i. p. 510.

²¹ “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.”—Luke xvii. 20.

²² “Ye holy and humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord; praise Him and magnify Him for ever.”—*Benedicite omnia opera*.

²³ Henry Martyn.

²⁴ “I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.”—Zech. ii. 5.

²⁵ “And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices,” &c.—Rev. x. 4—7.

²⁶ These four lines are taken from the concluding passage of Heber’s “Palestine;” the whole passage is conceived in a strain of mingled poetry and prophecy, entirely accordant with that attributed to him in the text. Indeed, the liberty which has been taken in the poem with that honoured name, would be scarcely justifiable without the fullest authority for the expressions which have been put into his mouth. It is trusted that the extracts from his writings may be allowed to furnish such authority.

²⁷ “And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.”—Rev. xxi. 10—21. Allusion is made to this vision of the New Jerusalem in the former part of the Poem, in the passage commencing

“Is it the vision seen erewhile

By the lone saint in Patmos’ isle?”

²⁸ “Peter saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me!”—John xxi. 21, 22.

²⁹ Καταβαῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς τῶν φώτων, παρ' ᾧ οὐκ ἔστι παραλλαγή ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα—with whom is no variableness, neither is he changed into darkness. TYNDALE'S and CRANMER'S Version of JAMES i. 17.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED.

THE Editors have arranged the following Poems according to their dates, as far as they have been known ; they are spread over a considerable space of time, and were written under very different circumstances. Some were composed by the Author when he was at school ; some during his residence in Cambridge, and when spending his long vacations at the Lakes or in Wales ; others have been written in after periods of his life. This will account to the reader for any variation of feeling or sentiment that they may be found to express.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

TO HIS MOTHER ON HER BIRTHDAY.

OH they were not in vain !—were not in vain !
Thy days of sorrow and thy hours of pain !
When, o'er the cradle of our tender years,
Rose the warm incense of a Mother's prayers.
Then it was sweet to mark the innocent smile
Play round the lip of infancy, the while
It viewed its parent's features,—to descry
The dawn of reason in its kindling eye,
And, o'er its little lips in rapture hung,
To catch the lisplings of th' unfettered tongue.
These were thy pleasures then !—The infant breast
Soon the young flame of filial love confessed ;

And, ere the mind that earliest flame approved,
Loved without knowing whom or what it loved.
Years have rolled on :—affection cannot tire ;
Still glows her altar with the Vestal fire,
Shining more fixedly, more clearly bright,
While reason owns that nature taught aright.
Yes, dearest Mother ! if thy tender eye
Gazed fondly o'er our helpless infancy,
And joyed in those imperfect signs to see
The first expressions of it's love to thee,
Wilt not thou now receive and now approve
The plainer tokens of more perfect love—
Love, which the world's best feelings far outvies,—
Binding in stronger, purer, happier ties,—
Reigning when other passions shall subside,—
Which time corrupts not, death cannot divide ?
Thou hast, by mild instruction early given,
Bent our young footsteps on the road to heaven.
And now from realms of light beyond the grave,
Bursts the broad splendour o'er th' illumined wave ;
Now the tossed bark upon life's stormy sea
Springs to its haven of eternity ;
E'en now from fairer climes a purer gale
Pours its rich fragrance on the shattered sail.

Oh haste we on ! till every trial cease
In perfect holiness and perfect peace :—
Till in that world of life, and love, and bliss,
The cup shall satisfy, we taste in this.

West Bilney Lodge,

Feb. 13, 1825.

ON MEMORY.

WHEN the wrung heart, with passionate regret,
Dwells upon joys too beautiful to last,
And o'er the fond remembrance lingers yet,
As if its dreaming could recall the past ;
When fades the present from the wildered sight,
As musing memory shifts the fancied scene,
Till we can almost grasp the lost delight,
Feel as we felt, and be as we have been ;—
Feel—yes, a livelier, tenderer beauty springs
O'er the loved features of each happy day ;
For memory's touch, in bright profusion, brings
All, all the joy, but steals the gloom away :
When that we fondly loved, and now deplore,
Glides o'er the soul like moonlight o'er the sea,
And wears a smile, perchance, it never wore,
And seems a being it could never be ;

And when, at length, those rainbow-colours fade,
Which fancy's sunbeam on the past could throw,
When clouds and tears come hurrying on instead,
And we are left to certainty and woe ;—
Left but to find our rose-twined garland dead,
To see the future darken on our view,
To mourn those joyous days for ever fled,
And vainly madden o'er the long adieu ;
Oh, then we feel how empty and how vain,
Is human pleasure in its gayest dress ;
We feel our sky but smiles to frown again,
And earth is not the home of happiness !
And then a sweet, pure light creeps trembling in,
Unlike romantic fancy's frolic ray,
Which seems unnoticed on the mind to win,
With the bright promise of a better day.
It is not Hope,—at least, not that which says
That the loved past shall in the future live,
Which like the meteor's wild illusion plays,
And points to joys it never means to give ;
It is not Love,—for absence, time, or art,
Its soft impressions may too soon efface,
Or death's cold touch may chill the faithful heart,
Where we had fondly built our dwelling-place :

No ! 'tis from worlds more bright than this below,
That trembling sunbeam draws its sacred birth,
And bids the breast its own sweet comfort know,
Too pure for sense ! too beautiful for earth !
'Tis from those realms where we may shortly prove
How bright, how pure, affection's lamp may burn ;
Where we may gaze upon the face we love,
Nor dread the anguish of a cold return ;
Where, waking memory to a second birth,
We may, untroubled, trace the path we trod,
And having vainly sought for rest on earth,
May find it in the bosom of our God.

Date not known.

FROM A BROTHER TO HIS SISTER

ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

OH, dinna ye ken, how the daisies bloom
Suld deck the lily lea,
How the bright sun, glinting through the gloom,
Suld brust the violet's mossy tomb
To twine a wreath for thee?
But, wae for the lang, lang winter daie!
Baith violet blue, and daisie gaie,
And "the flowers of the forest are a' wede away!"

I hae na wreath for thee, lassie,
I hae na wreath for thee,
Na wilding nursed by spring's ain sigh,
Na blossom springing tardilie,

To twine about thy bree :
But, ah, I send my tiny lay,
Wi' prayers for mony an happy daie,
Though " the flowers of the forest are a' wede away."

For kenned by Him, wha dwells above,
A brither's prayer maun be ;
And, oh, methinks a brither's love,
Than these frail diamonds of the grove,
A fairer wreath for thee.
'Twill live through life's short cloudy daie ;
'Twill bloom in heaven's eternal ray ;
When " the flowers of the forest are a' wede away."

Cambridge,
March 25, 1826.

STORM ON SCAWFELL, IN CUMBERLAND.

I STOOD upon the mountain, whose vast brow
Looks down his four concentrate vales below ;
Here Esk smiles coyly thro' his woody glade ;
There Wastdale's chaos flings its length of shade ;
Next, in bright contrast with that gloomy vale,
The life and loveliness of Borrowdale ;
And last, that wild and deep and swampy dell,
Where Langdale's summits frown upon Bowfell.
And all seemed hushed :—the very clouds had rest,
Gathering sleepily round the mountain's breast ;
Nature held in her breath, and list'ning deep
Waited the rousing of the whirlwind's sleep.
It came ;—and riding round the darkened fell,
Blew its shrill trumpet down the startled dell ;
Then walked the thunder forth ;—in red right hand,
Shaking the terrors of the levin-brand ;
Pronouncing, as his lurid floor he trod,
The incommunicable name of God ;—

A few loose ragged notes,—then, clear and strong,
In one tremendous peal it rolled its power along :
The mountain streams, to sudden fulness grown,
Filled up the pauses with their tenor tone :
And then the general chorus—all at once
Lifted their voice in concert—torrents glance,—
The shrill blast shrieked the treble, and aloud
The big base bellowed from the thunder cloud :
Then earth took up the strain ; at one fierce bound
Burst forth her organ's energy of sound,
Whose pipes were valleys ;—each romantic dell
Prolonged the note that centred in Seawfell,
And told it to its mountains :—'twould rejoice
The dullest ear that mingled storm of voice,
As those old hills' immense chaotic frame
Sent up the tumult of their glad acclaim ;
Grey Skiddaw called Blencathra, and passed on
The song of echoes down thy vale, St. John ;
Then back it rolled, and in his gloomy dwelling,
Woke up the spirit of the lone Helvellyn,
Who yelled deep welcome as the wild notes passed,
And Dunmail-raise and Kirkstone heard the last.

And I felt, as I stood on the wild hill's slope
How the tempest had stirred my spirits up ;
And I lifted mine own weak voice on high,
Mid the general roar of earth and sky ;
And I sang to the storm as it drifted by ;
And 'twas very sad, as the last notes died,
Fainting away on the mountain's side.—
But 'tis all in vain in a stranger's ear,
To speak of the things that we see and hear ;
And would you know what it is to be
As airy, and happy, and bright, and free,
As the zephyr that plays on the sunny lea,
Would you hear what I hear, would you see
 what I see,
You must come to the mountain and dwell with
 me.

*Written at the Lakes,
Summer, 1826.*



THE DRUID'S LAMENT.

THIS Poem was written for the Chancellor's Medal in the year 1827. It was understood at the time that the votes of the Examiners were equally divided between this exercise and that of the successful candidate ; but, in consequence of the decision having been given in favour of the latter by a casting vote, the Vice-Chancellor ordered that a second prize of books, of the value of £7 10s., should be awarded to the Writer of this Poem. (ED.)

*The following Poem is supposed to be the lament of one of
the Druid bards, after the battle of Mona.*

“ Goe, little booke, thyself present,
As child, whose parent is unkent,
To him that is the president !
And, when his honour hath thee redde,
Crave pardon for thy hardy-hedde :
But, when thou art past jeopardie,
Come, tell me what was said of mee.”

SPENSER.

Introduction to the Shepherd's Calendar.

THE DRUID'S LAMENT.

Καὶ μὴν ὅτι μὲν χρηστὰ διδάξω πιστεύω τοῦσδε θεατάς,
εἰ καινοτομεῖν, ἐθελήσουσιν, καὶ μὴ τοῖς ἥθεσι λίαν
τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ἐνδιατρίβειν.—τοῦτ' ἔσθ' ὃ μάλιστα δέδοικα.*

ARISTOPH. *Ecc.* 583.

I AM come here to die!—the battle's yell
Hath fainted into stillness; and I hail
Nature's bland voice again,—the mellow swell
Of the far billow, which the moon-beam pale
Hath kissed into repose,—the evening gale,
Rich with the spoil of violets, seems to creep
On the charmed ear so softly musical,
As it would bid the wretched cease to weep,
And o'er the victor's rage fling the sweet spell of
sleep.

* The Greek motto has respect to the adoption of the Spenserian metre instead of the verse usually employed for the Chancellor's poem.—(ED.)

Yes, let him sleep,—and wake to toil again!

Yet be there other sleepers, round whose bed
The balmy tears of eve are wept in vain ;

And morn will smile—it cannot wake the dead.

Spirits of song !—my brethren !—are ye fled ?—
Ye have not lived to rue a tyrant's hate,

To see your shrines—your dwellings ravished ;
I do not—dare not mourn your glorious fate ;
But feel that ye are gone,—and I am desolate.

My lonely lyre !—my hand is on thy string,—

It is the last — last time !—my childhood's
toy,—

Fond solace of my youth, wilt thou not bring

To my last hour one parting note of joy ?—

I do remember, when a wayward boy,

How I would woo thee, till my soul caught fire,

And glowed and maddened in the sweet em-
ploy :

How I would far from human eye retire,
To talk in solitude with thee,—my lonely lyre !

Then, Mona! 'mid thy forest grandeur nursed,
I drank the rapture of thy Druid's strain ;
Then airy forms on fancy's slumber burst,
And youth's bright dreams, as beautiful as vain.
Yet not at once that Druid loosed the chain
That bound my soul, and bade it, madly whirled
In fire-wheeled car, Heaven's peerless height
attain :

But darkly,¹ slowly the dread truth unfurled,
And drew the curtain back, that veils another world.

Sweet Memory ! touched by thee, enjoyment past
A brighter hue—a livelier beauty wears ;
And thou art wont, in playful mood, to cast
The rainbow's lustre o'er a scene of tears :
Thus now, beneath thy softened tint, appears
The pang—the struggle, when my soul was riven
From all of earth that soothes, enchants, en-
dears,

From human passion's blandishment,—and given,
With all its warmth of zeal,² to solitude and heaven.

The faith I cherished was a feeling rife
With poesy and grandeur and delight.
Oh ! when Belinus woke the world to life,
My eager hand would rouse his ³beacon bright!—
My song would chide the lingering gloom of
night !
And, as he rose, and, flinging from the sky
Round ⁴Snowdon's brow his glittering wreath
of light,
Laughed on the waves, that smiled responsively,
My spirit caught a glow for mortal breast too high.

And him—the storm-god Taranis, whose eye
Glares through the clouds in lightning, where
the rout
Of mingled elements rolls hurrying by—
Him have I worshipped ; and his awful shout—
That chorus, by his deep voice bellowed out,
Was full of joy and melody to me.
I loved to hear it leap heaven's vault about ;
Till earth took up the song with noisy glee,
And pealed from all her hills its fierce antistrophe.⁵

There ⁶ be some moments to our musing given
Full of eternity !—and such were mine ;
When I could feel this bosom-spark of Heaven,—
This purer essence of a breath divine
Gaze back on what it had been—to its shrine
Of other years ; or raise, in shadowy files,
Visions of future being, till it shine
Throned in the splendor of those sunny isles,
Where endless pleasures reign, and cloudless beauty
smiles.

But such were *lonely* joys !—The festive song,
The slow procession and the solemn rite,
The shout, that rung the startled woods among,
“ Gather the mystic branch, the year’s last night
“ Melts into morn !”—these once could wake
delight ;
'Twas proud to see the Druid throng sweep by,
Their white robes glistening in the moon’s young
light,
Which, struggling through the oak’s dark shade
on high,
Glanced on the scene below of sacred revelry.

Oft ⁷ too we tracked the forest's deep abyss,
To seek such wilding herb, or summer flower,
In whose bright chalice evening's dewy kiss
Nursed health or poison :—at this dreadful hour
I thank those venom'd leaves, whose kindly
power
Shall free my longing spirit :—once I blessed
A charm, that, gathered from a fairer bower,
Poured refluent vigour through the purest breast
That e'er for mortal youth love's trembling flame
confessed.

Yes, I did love her,⁸ though that love to me
Was all forbidden rapture !—her pale cheek
Sunk on my throbbing breast, and droopingly
Bowed her frail form, so delicately weak ;—
I waved the vervain-bough, and strove to speak
The potent spell—oh heaven ! it died away,
Her eye's delirious fire—the livid streak
That stained her brow ! and, in its stead, a ray
Beamed forth more mildly bright than parting blush
of day.

Hence radiant phantom!—vainly beautiful!

Thine eye's blue languor, and thy sun-kissed hair
Have soothed my soul:—but now—'tis cramped
and dull

In the cold desolation of despair.

Hence loveliness!—I'll seek, in thought, the
bare

And rugged piles, which Genii's strength and skill
Toiled a proud temple to our gods to rear.

I'll think of that fierce pang, whose shuddering thrill
Froze me, when first I marked the vital stream distill

From human victim's side; with ruthless aim

The priest⁹ had dealt the blow; the seer stood
nigh,

Watching each motion of the quivering frame—

Each strong contortion of the lip and eye:

He bade me strike my lyre;—unknowing why,
I tremblingly obeyed:¹⁰—but, mark!—the while

The victim's sunken cheek beamed faint reply

To notes, that thus could deadliest throe beguile,—
And his pale lip grew still, and froze into a smile.

These were thy rites, red Hesus!¹¹—but to thee
There was a gentler sacrifice of song.
How, ¹² 'mid the feast of shells, I've smiled to see
The whirlwind passions of the savage throng
Spell-bound by music ; — now the war-note
strong
Yelled in deep concert to the martial strain,
That bounded swellingly my chords long ;
And then I hushed them into tears again,
With a low wailing dirge for early valour slain.—

One night—one solemn night—with him, my guide
Of early youth,—my Druid-friend, I sought
The solitary shore ; the breeze had died,
And scarce its gentle kiss one dimple wrought
In ocean's cheek :—he paused ;—the moon-beam
caught
His face upraised to heaven, and, as it shone,
Tinged with a paler hue those lines of thought ;—
He seized my lyre, and woke one deep—deep tone—
“ Mortal,” ¹³ he cried, “ attend !—know God is God
alone.

Gaze forth into creation ! view him there !

His voice is thunder, and his shadow, light !

The forms of earth—the glorious gems of air

Are symbols of his attributes :—his might

Called this fair orb from chaos and from night ;

And yet again shall that blue sky be furled,—

That page, deep stamped with characters so
bright

Of praise and power, again to ruin hurled !

Fierce flames shall spread a pall above this smiling
world !”¹⁴

Would that dread hour were come !—I could
rejoice

To see those flames, in earth's deep bosom pent,

Rear the red flag of havoc ; and the voice

Of the Omnipotent, in thunder sent,

Annihilate the Universe ;—content

My soul fair Nature's blackening wreck would
scan,—

Spring forth into its native element,¹⁵

And revel in its liberty :—it can

Bow to the will of Heaven,—not to the yoke of man.—

My country !¹⁶ I have gazed upon thy face—
Thy sleeping face—thy moon-light loveliness ;
Then was such grandeur mingled with such grace,
I could scarce weep away the fond excess
Of passionate admiration ;—thy blue dress—
Thy beauteous zone of ocean !—Snowdon's might,
Whose rugged sides each varied shade confess
Of ebon and of ivory !—At night
Say who could look on these, and weep not at the
sight ?

Yes, weep,—and love,—and worship ;—so did I :—
But now grief, anger, hatred, shame, remorse,
Have made the fountains of my soul grow dry,—
Have frozen the tide of feeling in its course.
My country, thou art lost ;—a tyrant's force
Winds his base chain around thy giant hills,—
Withers thy sacred oaks,—and, oh, far worse !
Enslaves thy free-born sons, and coldly spills
Thy heart's best blood !—'Tis well ! he is no foe who
kills.

We fought for thee, my country ;—'twas the strife
Of desperate rage—the struggle of despair—
The last wild stroke for liberty and life :

We braved the invader in his fierce career ;—
Thy heroine daughters with their flowing hair,
Poured in mad onset on the foe, and high
Raised the shrill shriek,—and tossed the torch
in air ;—

Thy grey rocks, echoing back their thrilling cry,
Sent the dread war-note forth—" To death or
victory !"

On—on we rushed ;—the Roman's serried file
Shrunk, as it marked the coming tempest grow,
Then paused with sullen and contemptuous smile,
And calmly stern—determinately slow,
Levelled at once the lance's bristling row :—
On—on we rushed,—what recked we if to die ?

My brethren bared their bosom to the foe,
Blessing the murderer with their latest sigh,
Whose mercy gave but chains—whose death-blow,
liberty.

Rejoice, proud Empress of a groaning world !

Where battle's crimson tide flows deep and
strong,

Be thy triumphant eagle's wing unfurled !

And, when soft peace glides laughingly along,
Thine be the festive dance—the joyous song !

I do not curse thee, Rome.—Live, tyrant ! live !—

Yet is there One will measure wrong for wrong
The God¹⁷—the God of vengeance ;—He will give
As thou hast given ;—for me—I spurn thee, and
—forgive.

Ha !¹⁹ 'twas the shriek of death !—again !—again !

What visions to my strengthened eye are
given !—

A fiery shore—a blood-empurpled main—

Through lurid clouds of smoke, in tumult driven,
The scythe-armed chariot—helm and buckler
riven :—

Yes, Britain triumphs !—Britain's warrior-queen !

Rome bites the dust ;—right bravely have ye
striven,

Children of liberty !—The time hath been
When bards would hymn your praise ; and yet again,
I ween,

That time will come : the veil is half withdrawn—

The future's veil of gloom ;—I see !—I see

The horizon purpling with thy glory's dawn,

My native land !—thy sons shall yet be free—

And brave,—but not in vain ;—thy name shall
be

The rallying-shout of nations—heard afar

In distant lands, and thundered o'er the sea :—

Thy blood red standard, victory's beacon-star,

Shall stream with meteor flash along the clouds of
war.

And then, perchance, this fluttering soul of mine,

That thus in music sighs itself away,

Again shall prompt some happier bird, to twine

Thy fadeless oak-wreath with his rapturous lay—

To sing the triumphs of thy brighter day.

Till then, farewell, dark Mona's woody dell !

Farewell, thou deep blue sea !—ye mountains
grey !

Farewell, my lyre !—thy last expiring swell

Just echoes—it is past ;—my lonely lyre, farewell !

NOTES.

¹ They communicated their doctrines in riddles and allegories. *Καὶ φασὶ τοὺς μὲν Γυμνοσοφιστὰς καὶ Δρυΐδας ἀνιγμάτων δῶς φιλοσοφῆσαι.* DIOG. LAERT. L. 6.

² Twenty years was the period of education for those who were to be initiated : it was to be conducted “ in locis ruinosis et sylvestribus.”

³ Beltane-fires to the Sun in spring.

⁴ I have followed the example of Mason in using the modern name of this mountain.

⁵ Of course I mean not to insinuate, by using this word, that the Druid had any idea of the Greek division of the choral ode, I could find no other word that reached what I wished to express so well : I have therefore ventured it.

⁶ Their idea of the doctrine of transmigration was, that the soul, after progressive perfection, in various forms, was finally settled in “ an island of the blest.”

⁷ Hoc genus Vatum Medicorumque.—PLIN' XXX. 1.

⁸ The Druids appear to have considered themselves obliged to celibacy.

⁹ I have endeavoured here to observe the three different orders of Druids. The Bards—The Faids or prophets—The Druids or priests.

¹⁰ Since they divined by the actions of the victim, after the fatal blow, the omen thus elicited would be favourable.

¹¹——horrensque feris altaribus Hesus.—LUCAN.

¹² “The feast of shells.”—OSSIAN. So called from the drinking vessels being shells.

¹³ The first of the Druid mysteries revealed to the initiated.

¹⁴ Conditum mundum credebant, et aliquando igne peritulum.—AMMIAN. MARCELLIN.

¹⁵ The Druids held many doctrines in common with the Persians. Their veneration for fire was one.

¹⁶ Love of the parent soil, much inculcated among the Druids.

¹⁷ The Druids believed in the existence of a retributive Providence.

¹⁸ Fœminæ, in furore turbatæ “adesse exitium” canebant. Externosque fremitus in curia eorum auditos: consonnisse ululatibus theatrum, visamque speciem in æstuario subversæ coloniæ, jam Oceanum, cruento aspectu; delabente æstu, humanorum corporum effigies relictas ut Britanni ad spem, ita veterani ad metum trahebant.—TACIT. *Ann.* xiv. 32.

The storming of Camalodunum immediately succeeded the devastation of Mona.

MY LONELY LYRE.

“ We'll hush the unsuccessful strain
And seek our silent woods again.”

ELLEN FITZ-ARTHUR.

My lonely lyre ! thou hast betrayed me now !—

Thou wert my hope—my love—my joy—my
all—

And I once thought *thee* too my friend—and thou

Couldst fling a charm—a beauty o'er the pall

Of withered happiness—at thy soft call,

I know not what, but something would inspire

My soul with gladness ;—as the breast of Saul

Melted to such deep eloquence—such fire

Of sound. Thou hast betrayed me now—my lonely
lyre !

My lonely lyre !—thou knowest me as I am,—
Not as I seem to others : and to thee
My fears—hopes—feelings—passions—every flame
That warms or blasts me is discovered—free
My soul poured forth its treasures—that wild sea
Of tumult and of softness—joy and woe.—
The dearest friend can never win from me
The secrets thou hast won—thou badest them flow,
Like tears that grief had frozen—thou hast betrayed
me now.

I trusted thee for fame—it was weak trust :—
But thou didst promise, and I dared believe—
And so I trusted thee—it was unjust,
At least unkind thus coldly to deceive
And fling me forth, men's mockery to receive ;
“ Or, what is worse, their pity ”—I had borne,
With lip that writhed not—heart that would
not grieve,
The sneer of envy or the smile of scorn,
Hadst thou been faithful—but to have my patience
worn

With comfort and condolence—and for thee—

Thou tiukling plaything!—thou soft lady's
toy!—

Thou gilded nonsense! to whose minstrelsy

It had been hard to task the veriest boy

To listen for an hour—it might annoy

A mind more patient far than mine;—begone!—

If there were one whose peace I would destroy,

I well might breathe the wish, that such an one

Might trust thy faith like me—and be like me un-
done.

'Twas thus I thought—and when I do remember

The blight and blackening that at once effaced

My dream of hope—and how thy clouds, December,

O'er my bright sky their gloomy shadows cast—

How in a moment, stripped the flattering past

Of all its smiles—and from my future lot

Dashed each fair form, hope's rainbow touch
had traced,

And changed it into bitterness—such thought

Howe'er I grieve that I indulged—I marvel not.

But now I think less wildly—it is gone—

That dream of fame — and now, perchance
again

I learn the truth—that I may live unknown,

And not less happily ;—’twas very vain,

And worse than foolish to suppose a strain,

That scarce might move affection’s partial mind,

Could challenge justice ;—why should I com-
plain

That I have failed at stranger’s hand to find

What friendship might deny—nor yet be deemed
unkind ?

I have called others proud—and much have borne,

For having dared to say so—be it known

To such as understand me, tho’ I scorn

To unsay that saying, I am forced to own

All I have charged on them—to smart and groan

Beneath the writhing of that pang—they must

Forgive me now—methinks, it might atone

For such my folly, that I now am thrust

From fancy’s airy throne to my too kindred dust.

Yet have I comfort—'mid those groves of fir,
That murmur peace around my quiet home,
I'll wake my lyre again,—not to the stir
Of mad ambition ;—be the sun-writ tome
Of nature, all my learning,—the crisped foam
Of the free brook, my fame,—thy gentle fire,
Devotion, my sweet Muse,—the praise of some
Whose smile is all to me, my prize ;—aspire
To such—and I will love thee still, my lonely lyre !

Cambridge,

May 29, 1827.

EPIGRAM.

ΠΑΘΗΜΑΤΑ ΜΑΘΗΜΑΤΑ.

CORRIPUI citharam—lauram dare Granta solebat
Vatibus—at lauram non mihi Granta dedit.
Ecce iterum!—fortasse lyram meliora manebunt
Fata—iterum damnant tristia fata lyram.
Tertia pugna subit—jacturaque tertia,—Musam
Ter-victam ex acie tum revocare licet.
Parce, miser, doceantque παθήματα bina poetam
Jam sapere!—Ah nunquam, crede, poeta sapit.

TRANSLATION.

GRANTA, with all a mother's eye, regards
The first faint efforts of her embryo bards ;
And rears a throne, and twines a deathless bay,
To deck the deftest scribbler of the day.
I wrote,—and failed,—'twas but for scribbling sake ;
A freshman never wins—but by mistake.
Again I seized my pen,—invoked amain
Fortune's fair smile,—but fortune frowned again.
Once more.—Nay, sir, 'tis folly to keep on,
When fate and reason warn you to have done ;
And, by your double failure of the prize,
Might teach the veriest booby to be wise :
Once more ?—sheer madness, sir, I'd have you know
it,
Quite inconsistent.—Not, sir, with a poet.

Cambridge, May, 1827.

FANCY.



On, ask me not where fancy lies!
For fancy comes and fancy flies,
And fancy lives, and fancy dies,

A moment's fitful ray:—

Just comes one bright, bright smile to bring,
Just shakes one dew-drop from her wing,
Just strikes one note from airy string,
And then away, away.

Oh, ask me not where fancy dwells!
It is not in the deep green dells,
It is not in the blue hare bells,
That deck the sunny lea.

Oh, ask me not where fancy strays !
It is not on the winter's blaze,
Where the sun's last and loveliest rays
Melt in the sleeping sea.

Oh, ask me not what fancy sings !
They are not visionary things,
The poet's vain imaginings,
That breathe that long deep tone :
Ah, no ! for fancy's harp-strings clear
Are wet with lingering memory's tear,
Who weeps those touching notes to hear,
She wakes for me alone.

Oh, ask me not what fancy's spell
Hath wound around my soul too well !
To thee 'twere all in vain to tell,—
Impertinent as vain :
'Tis past—of those bright curls which lie
Wreathed in their golden brilliancy,—
Of the soft blue light of that sunny eye,
I dare not dream again.

March, 1827.

FRIENDSHIP.

THERE is a sunbeam beautifully shining
Through the dark clouds with care and sorrow rife :
There is a rose-wreath delicately twining
Among the brambles in the path of life :

There is a sweet bird exquisitely singing,
Albeit rude thorns upon her bosom press :
There is a fountain musically springing
From the cold rocks of life's sad wilderness :

There is a fair orb, to this world pertaining,
Which strives full meekly with the gloom of night ;
But all its radiance, all its beauty gaining,
From the great source of universal light .

Is it not friendship,—that delightful feeling,
All human griefs, all human joys above ;
But most its purest, tenderest charms revealing,
When stamped and softened with the form of love ?

Oh, 'tis the sunbeam mercifully lighting
Hope's glittering rainbow on the clouds of woe ;
'Tis the sweet rose-wreath the tired eye inviting,
That hides the harshness of the thorn below ;

'Tis the sweet bird, her cheering aid bestowing
On others' griefs, unmindful of her own ;
'Tis the clear streamlet, in the desert flowing,
That springs most purely from the hardest stone.

'Tis the bright planet, whose benign attendance
Doth half our darkness and our fears remove ;
But borrows all its beautiful resplendence
From the high essence of a God of Love.

1826.

MATHEMATICS.

THERE is a peevis*h*, cross, ill-nature*d* creature,
With little charm to boast in mind or feature,
Figure squat, stumpy, anything but fair,
Curved legs, face circular, and body square,—
A curious animal ;—but still, 'tis true,
This is the wretch my father bade me woo.
And I, full oft, most dutifully strove
To win her kindness or awake her love ;
Content to leave and lose the sweeter bliss
Of one, who sometimes lets me steal a kiss,—
A bright and airy spirit,—one of those,
Whose voice steals softly o'er the heart's repose,
Who paints with rainbow-touch the clouds of heaven,
Who weds the sunbeam to the waves at even ;—

One whom I knew my first, my dearest joy,—
Youth's fond companion,—childhood's early toy.
But I will chide her hence whate'er she be,
The other damsel is the bride for me.
You knew her, Carus, once, and basked the while
Beneath the favour of her sunniest smile ;
And you did promise, you would come and see
If you could not transfer her love to me.
I thought you could—at least I hoped you might
Smooth down old quarrels, and set new ones right,—
Might bring us both, each angry feeling past,
Beneath one vinculum to stand at last,—
Extract each root, impossible before,
Whence mutual hatred reared its deadly flower,—
Transform to softness her ungracious parts,—
Subtract our difference, and equate our hearts.
Come then, dear friend ; at least 'tis worth the trial ;
Methinks to you she dares not breathe denial ;
And when we're married, as I hope we shall,
You and my wife shall lead the bridal ball ;
Yours be the first fair slice of wedding cake,
And all the kisses you may choose to take.

Wales, Summer of 1827.

WRITTEN ON THE TOP OF SNOWDON.



AGAIN* I rest me on thy eirie height,
Thou monarch of the cloudy diadem !
Again I quaff “ the fierce and far delight,”—
The nectar of thy breezes,—and in them
There breathes a spirit, which upbears me high
O’er thy bare peak ; so wild ! so full
Of majesty—of terror ! I might try
To soar thus freely ’mid the stagnant, dull
Crowd of the city,—but in vain. Oh thus—
Thus would I mount to heaven ! but not as now
To see dark clouds careering over us ;
But to view all the glory of His brow,
Whose very light is heaven ; and spurn the clod
Of this cold world, to rest in happiness and God.

Wales, Sept. 4, 1827.

* The following note was appended to these lines: “ I had ascended it once before on that day.” (ED.)

TO W. C——,

WITH

A COPY OF “SCOTT’S LIFE OF NAPOLEON,”
AFTER HE AND THE AUTHOR HAD SPENT THE
SUMMER TOGETHER IN WALES.

I MEANT not to insult thy love,
As though it were not far above
Such homage venal souls can pay,—
As though it must be bribed to stay,
And were not that pure holy thing,
Fresh from the warm heart’s warmest spring,
That asks not, and accepts not aught
Less worthy than a heart unbought,—
The spirit’s deep responsive tone,
That pays it with itself alone.

Yet must I plead, nor plead in vain,
That 'mid the bright and gorgeous train
Of tomes, thy glittering shelves that grace,
My book may find a dwelling-place.
They bear to stranger's wondering eyes
Exulting honours, proud device,—
Mine but reveals to thee alone
A name unnoticed and unknown ;
But which in future years may fling
A spell o'er thy lone heart's communing,
And raise a sigh of sweet regret
For suns that may have long been set.
And as the storied page shall trace
The headlong victor's frantic race,
Thou wilt sigh for him, whose baleful star
Raised him above his kind so far,—
Throned him on Glory's summit high,
In desolate sublimity,—
To him the blood-stained wreath assigned
The curse of having cursed mankind ;—
And, prompt each meaner joy to send,
Denied Heaven's dearest boon—a friend.
Then shall thy full soul sweetly wander,
On calmer, happier scenes to ponder,

Contrasting with those troubled waters,
Darkened with crimes, profaned by slaughters,
Life's humbler streams, on whose sweet breast
Religion's cloudless sunbeams rest—
Those wavelets through the soft flowers stealing
And by their light their course revealing.

Then, haply, on thy pensive eyes
Shall Cambria's misty mountains rise ;
Where, cradled in its green recess,
Sleeps Aber's cottage loveliness,
When evening swathes in shadowy pall
The solitary waterfall,
Or loves its purple light to pour
Along the cliffs of Pen-man-mawr,
Or tinges with its last farewell
Y Wyddfa's naked pinnacle.
But chief shall memory mark the spot,
Where peace hath built her sylvan grot,
Where Mona still delights to lave
Her tresses in the sunny wave,—
Shall tell of joys that pass'd o'er thee,
Like music o'er the midnight sea,—
The walk at eve, or dewy dawn,
Traced frequent on the sea-washed lawn,—

Shall to thy musing soul restore
Faces, thine eye may view no more ;
Words, from the tongue that blithely part,
The boundings of the happy heart—
. . . Oh, cease—my own hath caught the spell ;
It is too much,—farewell, farewell !

Cambridge. Dec. 9, 1827.

PARODY ON

“THE BURIAL OF SIR J. MOORE.”



Not a laugh had been heard for three months or more,
On the drowsy air reported ;
Not a creature had dared to assail the door
Of the room where our hero was sported.

He studied his Newton at dead of night,
The leaves with his lean fingers turning,
By the unsnuffed candles' misty light,
Or the pale lamp dimly burning.

Not a sigh was breathed, not a word was said,
Not a sign of visible sorrow ;
But he anxiously glanced at his watch as he read,
And he bitterly thought of the morrow.

At two he would creep to his desolate bed,
But sleep was, alas, denied him ;
And he lay like a questionist tossing his head,
With his formula-book beside him.

He thought, ‘ Oh ! how happy a man should I be,
Might I find some kind comforter that’ll
Be boiling my egg, or be making my tea,
While I’m far away in the battle.’

He thought how his friends had grown distant and
cool ;
How his rudeness had forced them to cut him ;
But he’ll never heed if he look not a fool,
In the bracket where Whewell * shall put
him.—

He started aghast ;—his musings were flown ;—
The blankets asunder were riven ;
For he knew as his ’larum was running down,
That it wanted a quarter to seven.

* Dr. Whewell was Moderator the year the author took his
B.A. degree.

—His face was beheld on the coach full soon,
As long as an old maid's story ;
For his toils being crowned with the wooden spoon,
He was trundling off home in his glory.

1827.

TO A HONEYSUCKLE,

GATHERED AT HACKFALL, AND PLANTED
AT WEST BILNEY, IN NORFOLK, SEPT. 16TH, 1828.

DEAR little plant ! thine artless sympathy
Might almost win a tear, but that mine eye
Hath felt the vanity of weeping. Yet
Thy leaves with bright and dewy tears are wet,
As though e'en now thou hadst not quite forgot
The wild lone beauty of thy natal spot,
And would'st not choose but pine in memory still
For thy fresh stream, grey rock, and woody hill.
Winter hath breathed on them his ruthless power—
Hath stripped the forest and hath spoiled the bower ;
But thy frail form, amid the dreary scene,
Still rears its summer coronal of green,
And heedless of his power to lay thee low,
Smiles on his rugged face, and bids him blow.

West Bilney Lodge,

Dec. 1828.

PLEASURES OF THE VISIBLE WORLD.

“ Beautiful !

How beautiful is all this visible world,
How glorious in its action and itself !”

BYRON.

Do you love to walk at the blush of dawn,
Where the grim rock frowns o'er the joyous sea ?
Do you love to ride o'er the dewy lawn,
Where the deer springs by in its reckless glee ?
Or to view the hill ere its veil be drawn,
Enrobed in its cloudy drapery ?

Do you love the fir-groves' sombre shade,
When noon her fiercest radiance flings ;
And to drink the pleasant murmur made
By the young Zephyrs' purple wings ?
Or on the brooklet's margin laid,
To watch its bright meanderings ?

Do you love the hour of Nature's rest,
The sun-set of the summer day,
When each tiny cloud of the gorgeous west
Is melting in that sun's last ray ;
And earth too looks her loveliest,
As anxious to persuade his stay ?

And do you love, the best of all,
The deep and pulseless hush of night ?
To list the voice of the waterfall,
That dimly glimmers into sight ;
And to view the vast sky's shadowy pall,
Bedropped with all its gems of light ?

Oh, lov'st thou these ?—then earth to thee
Is not of all her joy bereft ;
And whatsoe'er thy grief may be,
Her purest, holiest charm is left :
Thou still hast Nature's sympathy,
Though every other tie be cleft.

And be it so !—how merciful
Is the great Lord of earth and sky,
To leave us still such flowers to cull

From the dark fields of destiny !
Else life would prove a thing so dull
Of pain—the wish might rise to die.

West Bilney Lodge,
Sept. 18, 1828.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY,

WITH A SPEEDWELL.

“ I send the lilies given to me,
Tho’ long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither’d be,
But yet reject them not as such ;
For I have cherish’d them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine e’en here,
When thou behold’st them drooping nigh.”

CHILDE HAROLD.—CANTO III.

KNOW’ST thou the flower of the green hill’s side,—
The flower of the sunny lea ?
Oh, its name is tender at eventide ;
But it’s all too sad for me :

For it speaks of a fond, but deep regret
O’er feelings’ dull decay ;
As if those who lov’d could e’er forget
The friends that are far away !

And ne'er, oh ne'er, could I bear to distress thee
By breathing so harsh a thought ;
Nor send the loveliest flower, my Jessie,
To bid thee forget me not.

But I send you this bright and beautiful blossom
Of heaven's most summer hue,
To speak of a thought that inhabits my bosom,—
A prayer for a blessing on you.

The silken sail, on the world's wide sea,
To the changeful wind is given ;
And blest be the flower that asks for thee
The breath and the light of heaven.

Soft be the breeze that wanders o'er thee,
Soft be the wavelet curled,
Till the far blue hills are capped with glory,—
The light of another world.

Beautiful hills !—when all is past—
The spirit's fond endeavour—
Thence be thy welcome sung at last,
And there be thy home for ever !

Speed on ; speed well ; the fickle flower
Hath lost its charm to me ;
I hoped it true—perchance its power
May prove more kind to thee.

Yet take it !—hard I begged the prize
That thus I send to you ;
And stronger shall my prayers arise
To prove its omen true.

Castle Rising,

Dec. 30, 1828.

TO AN EARLY FRIEND,
ON HER TWENTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY.

“ Long years,
Long though not very many, since have done
Their work on both :—some suffering and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun ;
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run ;
We have had our reward.”

CHILDE HAROLD.—CANTO IV.

THEY are gone—those years of the painless mind,
The happy and the free !
They are gone with the breath of the summer wind,—
With the foam of the summer sea !

Yet scarce may'st thou deem how much I owe
To childhood and to thee,
For many a dream severest woe
Can never wring from me.

They were dreams of childhood's azure glance,
Of soft hair's sunny ray ;—
But why should I speak of what long, perchance,
Hath passed from thee away ?

Oh, joy was then like the deathless blue
Hesperia's soft sky wears ;
And hope was a rainbow, whose brilliant hue
Ne'er melted into tears.

Or if it did, from that light shower
So fresh each blossom grew,
'Twas hard to quarrel with a flower
All jewelled with such dew.

They are gone,—those young and delicate buds !
Or they live in remembrance only,
Which ofttimes over their beauty broods,
When the heart feels sad and lonely !

And summer is coming, a tint more warm
O'er earth and heaven to pour ;
But summer's the time of the thunder storm,—
The nurse of the passion flower.

Thou canst not trust to her joyous sky,
Or the smile of her sea's repose ;
For that smile oft sparkles o'er misery,
Which none but the sufferer knows.

But enough of regret :—there is God above ;—
There is suffering man below ;
And the soul hath a nobler task to prove
Than selfish bliss or woe.

She is taught from each gem that glows on high,
Or spangles the dewy sod,—
From each flower of the earth and each star of the
sky,
To know and to worship God.

She is taught by the love His words reveal,
Which seraphs bend to scan,
Another's grief or joy to feel,—
To love and to pity man.

Bright hours ! though the sunshine of mirth depart
And the laughter of childhood cease,
If they bring to the governed and softened heart
The heavenly boon of peace.

Blest hours ! though not all unknown to grief,
If grief hath taught the while
To give to the wounded heart relief,—
To the tear-worn cheek a smile.

Warm are the prayers that are raised for thee,
And warm are the hearts that raise them ;
And calm shall thy heavenward journey be,
As the smile with which God repays them.

Should the cloud ever rise of passing ill,
(In the clearest sky we find it,)
The brightness that lingers around it still
Shall tell of the sun behind it.

A present God, through all thy way,
Shall hold his shield before thee,
Till every cloud be swept away,
And grace be complete in glory.

Feb. 25, 1829.

A P O R T R A I T.



I HONOUR him, who stands in calm reliance

Amid a senate's frown, and shrug, and jeer ;—
Hurls in the scoffer's face his proud defiance,

And, fearing no man, dares his God to fear :

Who spins no smooth harangue for statesman's
ear

Of that misnamed expediency ; but he

Deems that expedient which is just and fair ;—

Pronounces that most safe which *ought to be* ;

And cries, “ Let man have right, for God hath made
him free.”

SUMMIT OF THE GREAT GAVEL.*

AT the furthestmost end of Borrowdale
There riseth a giant hill ;
It beareth the name of the great Gavel :
Few to ascend its height are able,
And few who are able will.
There throned aloft, in visible form,
I have kenned the Spirit of the storm,
Tossing his dark locks far and wide
Over the mountain's shadowy side :

* This mountain "is remarkable for a well of pure water on the very summit. This is not a spring issuing in the common way out of the earth ; but is supplied immediately from the atmosphere, in the shape of rain and dews. It is a triangular receptacle in the rock, six inches deep, capable of holding about two gallons ; and by containing water in the dryest seasons, shows how slight a degree of evaporation is carried on at this altitude."

OTWAY'S GUIDE TO THE LAKES.

He talks to his kindred friends that dwell
On gaunt Yewbarrow and grey Kirkfell ;
You may hear their voices well
All along Wastdale's gloomy dell,

On a gusty autumn even.

But it was not of these I meant to speak :—
In the solid slate of that awful peak,

Filled from the fount of Heaven,
Is scooped a small triangular basin,—
Just for the sun to wash his face in,
As he stops for a moment to rest thereon
After his hot day's work is done,
Ere he lies down to his curtained rest
In the golden chambers of the West :
No spring supplies it from below,—
Never a drop could filter through

The sheer and seamless stone ;
Yet never doth the water shrink
Below the basin's rocky brink ;
For it ever condescends to drink

From the skies—from the skies alone :
The crystal lymph, which sparkles there,
Is brought by the Genii of the air

From the clouds that are braided with purple and
 amber,
Festooned round evening's gorgeous chamber ;
And it may be at times they have snatched a gem
From the nethermost fringe of the rainbow's hem.

Thus, sometimes may you find the man
Standing apart from the human clan,
Musing, 'mid sternly kindred things,
His lone and wild imaginings,
At home 'mid Nature's rudest forms,
Conversing with her clouds and storms.
And should you deem it worth the pain
The summit of his soul to gain,
You may haply meet, like gem enchased,
Amid the bleak and barren waste,
A font of Heaven's old blessed dew,
Clear, sparkling, to refresh your view.
Oh ! his the spring of poesy,
That draws its waters from on high.
The cistern may be roughly hewed
By Nature in her wildest mood ;
But the water is pure as th' untrodden snow

On Liakura's* stainless brow,
That wept bright tears in days gone by
For the sacred urn of Castaly.
All lovely colours are blended there,
Born in the azure depths of air,—
Fancy and Feeling their hues have shed,
Like the braided purple and gold and red,
That canopy the day-god's bed ;
And Hope a livelier lustre flings
From the plumage of her rainbow wings.

* Parnassus. A village high up the mountain still retains the name of Liakoura.

ON A FRIEND

BURIED IN HENDON CHURCHYARD, MIDDLESEX.

“As my thoughts were dwelling upon him, who hath left us for a little season, they seemed to shape themselves spontaneously into these lines.” (Extract from a Letter.)

E’EN as the lovely scene, in which he lies,
Looks calmly o’er yon city-world of strife,
His soul conversing with its kindred skies,
Walked stainless through the busy paths of life.

He never knew the bitter taste of woe ;
All joy to life,—all peace in death was given :
He left a family of love below,
To join the family of bliss in Heaven.

November 18, 1833.

CHRISTMAS IN IRELAND.

A FRAGMENT.

DEAR Christmas! while the wings of winter brood
O'er the bleak muirland, and the tuneless wood,
While winds, in cadence desolate and drear,
Sigh their sad requiem for the dying year,
Thou comest with smiles upon thy buxom brow,
Dancing like sunshine o'er the waste of snow!
Dear to the man, who blithely quits awhile
The load of life, and learns like thee to smile!
Dear to the boy, his weeks of waiting past,
On whose notched calendar thou com'st at last,
With spells of holy peace and harmless mirth
To draw thy circle round the charmed hearth,
Where thine own yule-logs bid their splendours play
On cheeks as warm and eyes as bright as they!

In yon fair Isle, which heaven ordained to be
The flower of earth and jewel of the sea,
There dwelt an holy man, whose ardent mind
Was formed to better and to bless mankind ;
Sprung from patrician sires, 'twas only traced
In that unconscious elegance of taste,
Which, as he mingled with the vulgar crowd,
Abashed the foremost, and o'ercrawd the proud ;
If wealth were his, he did but feel its worth
When want or misery called his bounty forth ;
Warm heart to sympathize,—prompt hand to save,
Freely he had received and freely gave.
A faithful few his pastoral charge embraced,—
A little garden in a boundless waste ;
For Rome's dark priestcraft in its fatal coil
Had nipped the moral promise of the soil ;
Yet his no bigot pride ; where'er he came
The general welcome hailed M'Fillan's name.

We spake of Christmas ;—'twas a joyous sight,
When Winter sat on Keeper's lonely height,
And loosed his storm-sprites from their mountain
caves
To ply their pastime on Lough Derrig's waves,—

Oh, 'twas a joyous sight, at such a time,
To see M'Fillan brave the bitter clime,
Dispensing comfort, warmth, and kindly cheer,
And gracious words that made the gift more dear ;
Till spite of frowns on Nature's brow that dwelt,
The glorious jubilee was kept and felt.

That morn beheld him in the house of prayer
Chain every eye, and spell-bind every ear,
Unfolding Heaven's sublimely simple plan,
Glory to God on high, good will to man !
To us, so long from Eden's portals driven,
To us a child is born,—to us a Son is given !
The mighty God, the Sire of endless days,
The Prince of peace, whose gentle sceptre sways
A realm that owns no bound, and knows no end,
O'er all the Sovereign, and of all the Friend !
Meekly, yet earnestly, that simple horde
Drank the deep waters of the Sacred Word ;
E'en the poor Papist, doubting and in fear,
Crept to the well of life, and stole his share.

That eve, while grateful hearts assembled round,
The hall was lighted, and the board was crowned,
The pine tree spoils had left the mountain side,
And roared and crackled up the chimney wide ;

On high, the carv'd oak tracery between,
Laurel and holly blent their deathless green ;
Below, with temperate feast and guiltless sport,
The happy Pastor held his rustic court.
Who had not smiled to see those rugged kerne
Sleek the rough locks, and smooth the visage stern,
Proffering their thanks in that wild phrase and tone,
Which none may catch save Erin's genuine son :
“ God bless your reverence, and your lady's grace !
“ God bless the darlings, bless each bonnie face ;
“ Grant each and all, in after years to prove
“ Worthy their father's care—their mother's love.”

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Camberwell, 1836.

LINES SUGGESTED BY THE VIEW OF THE
ALPS

AT

SUNRISE FROM THE RIGHI

ON THE BORDERS OF THE LAKE OF LUCERNE.

O GOD! upon the mountains, in the calm
And beauty of the morning, where each sound
Seems like the accents of an holy psalm
Swept from the lyre of Nature, and the ground
Offers its matin incense wide around,—
Oh God! upon the mountains is there one,
Whose heart receives not, like yon lake profound,
The imaged beauty,—sends not back a tone
With Nature's solemn voice in gentlest unison?

Thy mighty Presence is around us,—felt,
Not in its terror, earthquake, storm and fire,
In sights and sounds of harmony, that melt
Into the spirit's depths, 'till each desire
Rises to Thee ; as yonder clouds aspire
To the huge mountains' summits, from below
Issuing in mist and dampness,—but as higher
They climb the everlasting peaks of snow,
Touched with the hues of heaven, and melting in its
glow.

And there ye stand, majestic Alps ! which never
By foot of man were trod,—ye stand, and smile
In calm derision at his weak endeavour
To touch the confines of each sky-girt isle ;
'Tis well ! albeit his chainless soul the while
Can make your peaks her stepping-stones to climb
Heights that look down upon your giant pile,
Where she shall rest immortally sublime,
When ye have crumbled down amid the wrecks of
time.

THE EXECUTION OF A MURDERER.

THEY led him forth !—'tis not for words to speak
The horrid hue that settled on his cheek,
As all the blood that flushed that face of fear
Had gathered into blue stagnation there,
And left his lip and brow ;—e'en death might fail
To paint thereon a tint more ashy pale.
A faintness fell upon him as he came
To that dark place of suffering and of shame ;
For though he spake not aught, nor changed his look,
His weight fell heavier, and his strong frame shook.

“ Oh God !” he moaned, and darted his fierce eye
Up to the clouds that frowned along the sky,
“ I thought they said, that mighty One above
Was something full of pity and of love :—

I showed no mercy—well deserve to see
The friend of all a bitter foe to me !
The sky feels hot above me—and my fate
Flares in my face. Oh, mercy !—'tis too late !”

This to himself ; he saw, heard, spake to none ;
He seemed to stand before his God alone.
He tried the stairs and reeled,—they dragged him on,
And there he stood—the fatal goal was won !
Then burst in one wild, deafening, maddening yell
The voice of execration ; winged from hell
Rained the hot curses round him far and near,
Pealed from its thousand tongues a city's damning
prayer.

And he—the wretched being, on whose path
Burst that fell storm of vengeance and of wrath,
Who caught from manhood's shout and childhood's
cry,

In one full curse, his death-sleep's lullaby,—
He was low kneeling when that fierce yell rang
Upon his ear :—a moment—up he sprang !
But oh, how changed ! no longer feeble, tame,
Death in his eye, and palsy in his frame—
The demon, checked and cowed and trampled, now
Resumed his throne upon his lip and brow,

And both were crimsoned ;—from his dark eye broke
Glances that blasted like the lightning stroke :
He strode across the platform, and low bowed
His head the while to hide him from the crowd.
The false boards, as he passed the fatal spot,
Rocked to so fierce a tread ; he heeded not :
He reach'd the palisade—the indignant cry
Assailed him, as he paused, more furiously :
Then to his height he drew him, and at once
Let loose the gathered lightning of his glance ;
His high-raised brow—his lip that wore the while
A sneer contempt had curled into a smile ;
The reckless stern defiance of his look
Silenced the loudest, and the boldest shook.
Abrupt he turned on me :—I felt each sense
Quail to that terrible brow's magnificence ;
His brotherhood with hell had fired his eye
With something of demoniac dignity—
Like Lucifer's gaunt scowl, as he looks down
Upon a world that sin hath stamped his own,
And sees in man, a thing so fondly wooing
The deadliest causes of his own undoing,
As scarce can bribe impatience to delay
To stoop his pinions on so mean a prey.—

“ ’Tis well !” he cried ; “ mine eye hath pierced
the gloom,
Hath glanced upon the secrets of the tomb :
I’ve seen—what thou may’st see, with more of
wonder,
When death shall snap the silver thread asunder ;
I’ve seen—no matter what—I feel my fate,
Lorn as it is, and deeply desolate,
More happy now : ’twere harder far to dwell
With these on earth, than nobler fiends in hell !”
“ And deem’st thou,” I replied, “ whate’er you
be,
There’s none to feel, to weep, to pray for thee ?
I came to see thee die, but not to share
Thy foes’ wild joy, or feast on thy despair ;
Their zeal for God may hiss, and hoot, and ban—
Mine half forgets the *murderer* in the *man*.
Too blest to point thee One whose latest sigh
Burst heaven’s bright portals to the felon’s eye ;
I saw with hope thy softened spirit bow,
And less had pitied than I pity now.
And, know, some minds are far too keen to stay
At the frail fence that warns the crowd away ;

Slight were the task for mine its way to win
To thy soul's secret council-room within,
And read in burning brow and flashing eye
The last alternative of misery,—
The desperate effort to relieve a heart
That else had broken.”—I beheld him start,
And a low sigh half-struggled from his breast—
He seized my hand, and firmly, warmly pressed.
“ God bless you, sir ! for you the murderer's prayer
May ask, what for himself it doth not dare !”
He raised his arm towards his face ; the chain
Resisted, and it sunk—he sigh'd “ 'Tis vain !
And I have done with shame !” It was a tear
Had gathered in that savage eye, and clear,
And large, and warm as childhood's ;—as it fell,
My own poured forth a mute and sad farewell.

I tottered from him to a small low room
That opened on the scaffold ;—all was gloom ; —
I flung me down ; my mind was then o'erwrought
To an intensity that is not thought ;
And my breast laboured with a deep oppression,
That those who know must *feel*—it lacks expression.

A shock—a jar aroused me—a dead sound
Of falling weight, checked ere it touched the ground !

I raised my eyes—('tis all in vain to guess
At motive in that moment's dizziness ;)
They seemed, in spite of me, perforce to seek
What most they feared to find, as if to wreak
Torture upon themselves ;—ay, there it hung,
That ghastly form, and slowly turned and swung !
'Twas he who last spoke,—wept with me ; no strife,
No writhe of limb or muscle told of life,
Save one long heave, one gathering, deep'ning swell,
That sunk as slowly ; then the shoulders fell—
The limbs relaxed—the guilty soul had burst
Its bonds, and gone to hear and prove the worst.

God only knows the rest ! 'Tis not for me
To judge what it hath been, or say what it may be.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMN.

WHO shall ascend to the holy place,
And stand on the holy hill ?
Who shall the boundless realms of space
With shouts of rapture thrill ?
Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !
For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth !

The servants of the Lord are they,
The pure in heart and hand,
For whom the eternal bars give way,
The eternal gates expand !
Hallelujah ! &c.

Not to the noble, not to the strong,
To the wealthy, or the wise,
Is given a part in that angel song,
That music of the skies ;
Hallelujah ! &c.

But those, who in humble and holy fear,
With child-like faith and love,
Have served the Lord as their Master here,
Shall praise their Lord above.
Hallelujah ! &c.

And chiefly those who in youth to Him
Their morn of life have given,
With Cherubim and Seraphim,
And all the host of heaven,
Hallelujah ! &c.

Shall stand in robes of the purest white ;
And to the Lamb shall raise
The song that rests not day or night,
The eternity of praise !
Hallelujah ! &c.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMN.

“ That he may so pass the waves of this troublesome world
that finally he may come to the land of everlasting life.”—
THE BAPTISMAL SERVICE.

CHILDREN.

WE are a young and happy crew,
And hope our sail unfurled !
Why tell you us of passing thro’
The waves of this troublesome world ?

Joy is the sunshine of our sky
From morning-tide till even ;
And soft the breeze that whispers by,
To waft us on to Heaven.

CONGREGATION.

Yes, children, come it must, the day
Of darkness and of fears ;
And hope be changed into dismay,
And joy grow dim with tears !

CHILDREN.

Oh say not so ! or rather say,
Should such mishap befall,
Know ye no friend, on whom we may
For timely succour call ?

CONGREGATION.

Dear children, let the Son of God
Have place within your bark !
He'll make it on the stormiest flood
A safe and peaceful ark.

CHILDREN AND CONGREGATION.

And you and we, with Heaven in view,
Just ere our sails are furled,
Shall bless the hand that steered us thro'
The waves of this troublesome world.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMN.

MIGHTY God, may we address thee ?
Thou dost own a Father's name ;
Deign to hear, while children bless thee,
And thy wondrous love proclaim :
Love through all divinely beaming
In thy wondrous works we trace,
In creating, in redeeming,
In thy Spirit's promised grace.

May these thoughts from evil win us !
May we turn to God and live !
Shed thy love abroad within us,
And our every sin forgive !
Grant ! oh grant thy Holy Spirit,
(E'en a child for this may pray,)
Earnest that we shall inherit
Bliss in realms of endless day !

So, when years have hurried o'er us,
And our fathers sink to rest,
Following those who passed before us,
We may rise to call them blest.
Bidding still the wondrous story
To succeeding times descend,
That the praises of thy glory
May continue to the end !

Praise the Father, Great Creator !
Praise the Saviour, God the Son !
Praise the Spirit, Renovator
Of a world by sin undone !
Praise within the church be given !
Praise, to earth's remotest bound !
Praise along the arch of heaven
Let angelic hosts resound !

THE TRINITY.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMN.

OUR Father, if indeed thou art
The Father and the Friend
Of those who with a lowly heart
Before thy footstool bend,—
Hear us, Almighty and all wise,
And bless our infant years,
And sanctify our childish joys,
And dry our childish tears !

Dear Saviour, if thy smile of old
To little ones was given,
If children such as we behold
Thy Father's face in heaven,—

Thy gentle deed, thy gracious word
Helps us to bear in mind,
And make us like thyself, O Lord,
Holy and good and kind !

Blest Spirit, if to thee belongs
The morning of our days,
If from young lips and stammering tongues
Thou hast ordained praise,—
Come ! let us now thine influence prove,
Our guide and guardian be,
That we may know, obey and love
The Father, Son, and Thee !

1842.

THE TOMB OF JESUS.



COME, see the place where Jesus lies !

The last sad rite is done !

With aching hearts and weeping eyes,

The faithful few are gone.

They washed with tears each bloody trace,

On those dear limbs that lay :

Then spread the napkin o'er his face,

And turned and went their way.

By the sealed stones with grounded spears

The guards their vigil keep :

They wist not other eyes than theirs

Watch o'er the Saviour's sleep.

All Heaven above, all Hell beneath—
Bright hope and blank dismay—
Look on, to see if grisly Death
Can hold his mighty prey.

Now, grisly Death, thy powers combine !
Now gird thee to the strife !
Yet needs there stronger arm than thine
To keep the Lord of Life.

'Tis done ! O Death, thy Victor-guest
Hath smoothed thy visage grim !
O Grave, thou place of blessed rest
To all who sleep in Him !

January, 1843.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMN.

LET thy Spirit, Lord, descending,
Rest upon each youthful heart ;
May his grace, this work attending,
Heavenly life and love impart !

Let thy presence go before us
Through this wilderness of sin !
Spread thy sheltering pinions o'er us,
Light the lamp of truth within !

Oh thou good and gracious Father,
Write on us thy saving name !
Oh thou gentle Shepherd, gather
With thine arm each helpless lamb !

Feed us in thy verdant meadows,
Lead us by thy quiet streams ;
Till beyond the vale of shadows,
Heaven's unclouded glory beams !”*

* This was the author's last production, written under circumstances of great bodily weakness and suffering. In a letter, dated Stainley, May 9th, 1843, he says, with reference to these lines, “ Whilst I was in the bath last night, I composed the enclosed hymn, which I think may be suitable for the school sermon.” At this time he was staying at Stainley Hall, near Ripon ; where he had gone early in the Spring with the hope of recruiting his impaired health ; and where he received every attention that the most unwearied kindness and devoted affection could suggest, until the day of his death, the 6th of October, 1843, in the 39th year of his age.—(ED.)

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